United Nations S/2012/180

Security Council

Distr.: General
27 March 2012

Original: English

Letter dated 27 March 2012 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that your letter dated 22 March 2012 (S/2012/179) concerning your intention to appoint Major General Fernando Rodrigues Goulart (Brazil) as Force Commander of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti has been brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council. They take note of the intention contained in your letter.

(*Signed*) Mark **Lyall Grant**
President of the Security Council

12-27679 (E) 270312

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United Nations S/2012/181

Security Council

Distr.: General
28 March 2012

Original: English

Letter dated 27 March 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to forward a letter from Isaias Afwerki, President of the State of Eritrea, dated 27 March 2012, in connection with the recent armed attack against Eritrea (see annex).

I would be most grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Araya **Desta**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

12-27790 (E) 290312

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Annex to the letter dated 27 March 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

As will be recalled, Eritrea has repeatedly clarified, through numerous letters, its views and perspectives in regard to the resolutions adopted against it by the Security Council as well as to the myriad failings of the "Monitoring Group". All these submissions have been duly circulated as documents of the Council.

This present submission is, however, different in substance from the issues cited above. But it is a continuation and an integral part of our latest petition addressed to the Security Council through our letter of 15 March in connection with, and in response to, the cynical public statement issued by the authorities in Addis Ababa to "legitimize" the illegal and provocative attacks perpetrated against Eritrea at the time.

That this grave development, and other similar violations and breaches of the rule of law carried out in earlier times, have occurred through the financing, operational guidance and diplomatic cover of the United States Administration and its intelligence agencies is well known indeed. Furthermore, these acts of destabilization have not been confined to Eritrea only but extend to the region as a whole. In the event, one would have expected the Security Council to be seized of these grave issues as a matter of paramount priority. The disconcerting feature of this reality is the fact that the culpable party is the very country that wields immense influence in the Council.

We hold the United States Government for responsibility in this and previous illegal attacks perpetrated against Eritrea, not for propaganda consumption. Nor is this driven by far-fetched inferences based on "conspiracy theories". Our accusation is firmly rooted in hard facts and evidences. In this respect, we request the Security Council to form an independent, transparent and accountable inquiry body to investigate and ascertain the validity of our case so that it may take appropriate remedial measures.

(*Signed*) Isaias **Afwerki**

United Nations A/66/756–S/2012/182

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
29 March 2012

Original: English

General Assembly
Sixty-sixth session
Agenda item 35
Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

Security Council
Sixty-seventh year

Identical letters dated 26 March 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia dated 26 March 2012, on the so-called "elections" held in the occupied regions of Georgia (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 35, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Alexander **Lomaia**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

12-27947 (E) 030412

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Annex to the identical letters dated 26 March 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia on the so-called "elections" held in the occupied regions of Georgia

26 March 2012

On 25 March 2012, the Russian occupation forces and their proxy regime conducted so-called "presidential elections" in the Tskhinvali region, Georgia. Following the events that unfolded there a couple of months ago, the conducting of the so-called "re-elections" confirms that the situation in the occupied Tskhinvali region is under the complete control of the Russian Federation. In addition, on 24 March 2012 the Russian occupation regime held the second round of so-called "parliamentary elections" in Russian-occupied Abkhazia, Georgia.

By creating an illusion of democratic governance, the Russian Federation attempts to legitimize — though in vain — the results of the so-called "elections", thus concealing both ethnic cleansing and demographic changes perpetrated against hundreds of thousands of innocent human beings through vicious and coercive methods. Among other internationally recognized human rights, the Russian Federation has stripped the internally displaced persons and refugees of the right to return to their homes in a safe and dignified manner. Moreover, occupation regimes continue on a daily basis to violate the fundamental rights and liberties of the sparse remnants of the population residing in the occupied regions. These circumstances are further complicated by the fact that representatives of the European Union Monitoring Mission, or other international organizations, are prohibited from entering the occupied regions of Georgia and assessing the dire situation in regard to human rights violations.

Notably, the international community had unequivocally condemned the so-called "parliamentary elections" of 10 March 2012 in the Russian-occupied region of Abkhazia, Georgia, and clearly emphasized their illegitimacy. International organizations and a number of States, through their officially issued statements, once again confirm strong support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and stress that these so-called "elections" represent a grave violation of fundamental principles of international law.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia calls on the international community to persevere in assessing the farce organized and executed by the Russian occupation forces in the occupied territories of Georgia, and continue to apply diplomatic pressure on Russia in order to ensure Russia's compliance with its internationally accepted obligations, including the terms of the ceasefire agreement of 12 August 2008.

United Nations S/2012/183

Security Council

Distr.: General
29 March 2012

Original: English

Letter dated 23 March 2012 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) established by the Security Council in resolution 1528 (2004) and most recently extended by resolution 2000 (2011).

Following the usual consultations, I would like to inform you of my intention to appoint Major General Muhammad Iqbal Asi (Pakistan) as Force Commander of UNOCI. Major General Iqbal Asi will replace Major General Gnakoudè Béréna (Togo), whose tour of duty will end on 13 May 2012. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Major General Béréna for his contribution to UNOCI.

I should be grateful if you would bring this letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon

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United Nations S/2012/184

Security Council

Distr.: General
28 March 2012

Original: English

Letter dated 28 March 2012 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that your letter dated 23 March 2012 (S/2012/183) concerning your intention to appoint Major General Muhammad Iqbal Asi (Pakistan) as Force Commander of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire has been brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council. They take note of the intention contained in your letter.

(*Signed*) Mark **Lyall Grant**
President of the Security Council

12-27883 (E) 280312

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United Nations S/2012/185

Security Council

Distr.: General
29 March 2012

Original: English

Second report of the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 2001 (2011)

I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 6 of its resolution 2001 (2011), the Security Council requested a report every four months on the progress made towards the fulfilment of the responsibilities of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). The present report is the second submitted pursuant to that resolution. It provides an update on the activities of the United Nations in Iraq since my last report, dated 28 November 2011 (S/2011/736). It covers key political developments and regional and international events as well as operational and security matters concerning Iraq.

II. Summary of key political developments pertaining to Iraq

A. Internal developments

2. During the reporting period, tensions rose between the main political blocs in Iraq. Al-Iraqiya suspended its participation in plenary sessions of the Council of Representatives on 17 December, calling for national dialogue and full implementation of the November 2010 Erbil agreement on power-sharing, which had paved the way for the formation of the new Government.

3. Political tensions between the State of Law Coalition and Al-Iraqiya escalated further when the Higher Judicial Council issued an arrest warrant for Vice-President Tariq al-Hashimi, a senior member of Al-Iraqiya, on 19 December on charges related to terrorist activities. As a result, Al-Iraqiya decided to stop attending the meetings of the Council of Ministers. Vice-President Al-Hashimi has denied the charges against him. He has remained in the Kurdistan Region, despite the request from the Ministry of the Interior that the Kurdistan Regional Government hand him over for trial in Baghdad. Vice-President Al-Hashimi made an official request that his trial be moved from Baghdad to Kirkuk or Khanaqin, which was rejected by the judicial authorities. On 22 February, the Higher Judicial Council announced that the trial would start on 3 May.

4. On 27 December, President Jalal Talabani met the Speaker of the Council of Representatives, Usama al-Nujaifi, to discuss political developments. They agreed to convene a national conference of all political blocs, which has gained the consent of all major parties. On 3 January, I issued a statement in which I expressed my

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concern at the rising political tensions and called upon all parties to work together to reach a mutually agreeable solution in accordance with the Constitution of Iraq. A preparatory committee tasked with preparing for the national conference, comprised of senior representatives of the National Alliance, Al-Iraqiya and the Kurdistan Alliance, has been holding regular meetings. The three political blocs have each prepared working papers for discussion within the preparatory committee intended to form the basis of an agenda for the national conference. To date, however, no substantive agreement has been reached on the agenda, date or location of the proposed conference.

5. On 17 January, absentee ministers were barred from signing any orders or running their ministries until they resumed their attendance of Cabinet meetings. Meanwhile, on 29 January, Al-Iraqiya announced its decision to resume its participation in sessions of the Council of Representatives. This is a positive development, as it has enabled an inclusive debate to take place among Iraq's democratically elected legislators on crucial issues, including the 2012 State budget, which was subsequently endorsed by the Council of Representatives on 23 February. On 5 February, Al-Iraqiya further announced its decision to return to the Council of Ministers, thus enabling it to resume its full participation in the institutions of the Government of national partnership.

6. On 12 December, the Governorate Council in Diyala voted to form an autonomous region and submitted a request to the Council of Ministers to initiate the referendum process in accordance with the 2008 Law on the Executive Procedure for the Formation of Regions. Demonstrations in protest of the decision took place in the Governorate, in cities with majority Shiite populations, and demonstrators occupied the Governorate Council building. The Governor and a number of Council members fled to the Kurdistan region and are currently holding Council meetings in the Khanaqin district. Arrest warrants have been issued for some of the Council members. On 27 February, the Governor of Diyala, Abdul Nasser al-Mahdawi, resigned.

7. Following its vote to establish a region on 27 October, the Governorate Council in Salah ad-Din followed an alternative route to forming an autonomous region permissible according to the Constitution. Forms were distributed in the Governorate on 12 January to collect signatures in support of the formation of such a region. The required number of signatures from the electorate was submitted to the Independent High Electoral Commission on 14 February. Neither request has yet been considered by the Council of Ministers.

8. With regard to Kirkuk, on 24 January, the Council of Ministers made recommendations to the Council of Representatives to abolish nine decisions by the former Revolutionary Command Council related to land expropriation in Kirkuk during the former regime and tasked the Shura Council, comprised of senior judges, to prepare a draft law on the cancellation of these decisions. The Council of Ministers also abolished all decisions concerning the cancellation of disposal rights and agricultural contracts for non-Arabs issued by the previous regime. The Governor of Kirkuk, Najimeldin Karim, welcomed the decisions of the Council of Ministers. However, members of the Arab Political Council, a Kirkuk-based Arab political bloc, strongly denounced the decisions, considering them a move towards expelling Arabs from certain areas. The Iraqi Turkmen Front leadership also expressed dissatisfaction with the decisions.

9. The Legal Committee of the Council of Representatives is currently examining a draft law on the cancellation of all decrees, decisions and laws issued by the former regime which had amended the Governorates' administrative boundaries. President Talabani submitted the draft law to the Council of Representatives on 3 November in accordance with article 60 of the Constitution. If the law were adopted, all disputed areas in the country would come under its purview.

10. On 28 December, the Kurdistan Regional Government announced that the next elections for the Governorate Councils in Erbil, Sulaymaniya and Dohuk would be held on 27 September 2012. The opposition parties in Kurdistan, including Gorran, the Kurdistan Islamic Union and the Kurdistan Islamic Group, expressed no objection to the date. On 8 January, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) announced its decision to enter the Governorate Council elections alone and not in coalition with the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), adding that the two parties had agreed in principle to run in the elections separately.

11. On 18 January, KDP confirmed that Nechirvan Barzani, the Vice-President of the Party and former Prime Minister of the Kurdistan region, would take over the Premiership of the Regional Government from Barham Saleh, in accordance with the 2007 strategic agreement between KDP and PUK. In late January, opposition parties announced their intention not to participate in the next Regional Government.

12. On 15 February, the Kurdistan Parliament elected Arsalan Bayiz (PUK) as its new Speaker and Hassan Mohammed Soor (KDP) as Deputy Speaker. During an extraordinary session of the Kurdistan Parliament on the following day, Nechirvan Barzani was confirmed as Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Regional Government and Imad Ahmed (PUK) was confirmed as Deputy Prime Minister. In both sessions, parliamentarians from the Gorran Party, the Kurdistan Islamic Union and the Kurdistan Islamic Group boycotted the vote. Also, on 16 February, Massoud Barzani, President of the Kurdistan Regional Government, appointed Kosrat Rasul (PUK) as Vice-President, a post that had been unoccupied for the last two years. On 7 March, President Barzani tasked Nechirvan Barzani with forming a new Government within 30 days.

B. Regional and international developments

13. In accordance with the November 2008 status-of-forces agreement between the Governments of Iraq and the United States of America, United States forces completed their withdrawal from Iraq on 18 December. Earlier, on 30 November and 1 December, the Vice-President of the United States, Joseph Biden visited Baghdad, where he had separate meetings with President Talabani, Prime Minister Al-Maliki and Speaker Al-Nujaifi, and attended a meeting of the Joint Iraqi-United States Coordination Committee. On 11 and 12 December, Prime Minister Al-Maliki visited the United States, where he met President Barack Obama to discuss bilateral relations. Both reiterated their commitment to the 2008 Strategic Framework Agreement between the Governments of Iraq and the United States.

14. The Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Nabil El-Arabi, and his Deputy, Ahmed Ben Helli, visited Baghdad on 8 December and 29 January-1 February, respectively, to review Iraq's preparations for the upcoming summit meeting of the League of Arab States. On 1 February, Hoshyar Zebari, the Minister

for Foreign Affairs of Iraq, and Ambassador Helli jointly announced that the summit would be held in Baghdad on 29 March 2012. The Foreign Minister also announced that the summit would address a broad range of issues, including the political situation in the region.

15. On 14 November, the former Prime Minister of Kuwait, Sheikh Naser Al-Mohammed Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, invited Prime Minister Al-Maliki to visit Kuwait, an invitation subsequently reiterated by the Kuwaiti authorities. In January, the Government of Iraq reaffirmed the Prime Minister's intention to accept the invitation and to visit Kuwait as soon as possible to hold talks with the Government of Kuwait on further normalizing relations between the two countries. The visit was delayed owing to the holding of parliamentary elections in Kuwait on 2 February. Subsequently, on 14 March, Prime Minister Al-Maliki visited Kuwait and met with the Emir, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and other senior Kuwaiti officials. The two sides announced a financial settlement of the bilateral issue of Kuwaiti claims against Iraq Airways. They also discussed other bilateral issues. In addition, the two sides discussed Iraq's outstanding Chapter VII obligations pertaining to Kuwait, including on boundary maintenance. Finally, it was agreed that the second meeting of the Joint Ministerial Committee would be held in April 2012 to continue to address all outstanding issues.

16. While the outcome of Prime Minister Al-Maliki's visit to Kuwait is a promising step forward, it remains imperative that Iraq fulfils its long-standing Chapter VII obligations pertaining to Kuwait as quickly as possible. These obligations include Security Council resolutions related to the Iraq-Kuwait boundary maintenance project as well as compensation payments to Iraqi private citizens pursuant to resolution 899 (1994). In addition, my High-level Coordinator for compliance by Iraq with its obligations pursuant to resolution 1284 (1999), Gennady Tarasov, continued his efforts aimed at the implementation of his mandate. He visited New York in December and Kuwait in February to hold consultations with Iraqi and Kuwaiti authorities as well as other relevant stakeholders.

17. On 3 December, Prime Minister Al-Maliki expressed his Government's willingness to mediate between the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the opposition with a view to finding a solution to the ongoing situation in the country. The Foreign Affairs Committee of the Council of Representatives subsequently established a special subcommittee comprised of members of various political blocs to follow up on developments in the Syrian Arab Republic and come up with proposals aimed at ending violence in the country. On 8 February, the Ministry of the Interior of Iraq denied reports of Iraqis participating in the violence in the Syrian Arab Republic and of arms smuggling into the country from Iraq. Subsequently, the Government of Iraq increased border patrols along the border.

18. On 3 February, Turkish aircraft struck several suspected positions of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in the Kurdistan region of Iraq, close to the border with Turkey, in response to the terrorist activities of PKK inside Turkey. On 11 February, Turkish aircraft again bombed suspected PKK hideouts in the Zap and Hakurk regions near the Iraq-Turkey border. Iraqi local authorities in the area confirmed the air strikes but did not report any casualties.

19. On 21 February, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iraq announced that Saudi Arabia had nominated its Ambassador to Jordan to also serve as non-resident Ambassador to Iraq, thus becoming the first Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Iraq since 1990.

III. Activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq and the United Nations country team

A. Political activities

20. In response to the political situation in the country, UNAMI intensified its consultations with all political leaders to encourage them to find the common ground that would restore confidence in the political process and reduce tensions. UNAMI has undertaken extensive political facilitation with a broad range of leaders and representatives of the main political parties. In his consultations, my Special Representative delivered four key messages: (a) that any solution should be in accordance with the Constitution; (b) the importance of an open and inclusive dialogue; (c) an appeal to Al-Iraqiya to end its boycott of the Council of Representatives and the Council of Ministers; and (d) the need for transparency in the process and outcome, including a clear mechanism for implementation and follow-up.

21. In conducting its political facilitation and outreach, UNAMI focused in particular on the important role of all Iraqi communities. During the reporting period, my Special Representative met members of the Iraq Minority Council and other representatives of the Christian, Shabak, Yazidi and Sabean Mandean communities, in Baghdad, Kirkuk and Ninewa. The meetings focused on the challenges to these communities' participation in Iraqi political life. UNAMI stands ready to continue supporting the Iraqi authorities in protecting all ethnic and religious components of Iraqi society, and promoting their rights in accordance with the Constitution, including their fair representation in the political system in Iraq. In addition, my Special Representative continued to meet with members of the Council of Representatives to discuss ways and means through which UNAMI could provide technical assistance to key committees. In particular, he met with the head of the Regions and Governorates Committee and the head of the Culture and Media Committee.

22. The Mission's political work also focused on Iraq's unfinished constitutional agenda, including the Federation Council, judicial reform and relevant laws which have yet to be enacted, including article 125 of the Constitution on minorities. A draft law for the establishment of the Federation Council was presented to the Council of Representatives on 21 January. The draft law and the key principles for the establishment of the Council were discussed at a round table convened by the Council of Representatives on 1 February. Participants, including parliamentarians, ministers and academics, discussed the draft law, including the Council's composition, powers and procedures and its institutional relationships with other executive and legislative bodies. At the request of the Council of Representatives, UNAMI provided technical assistance to the round table, including a presentation on international and comparative best practices in upper legislative chambers. The participants agreed on the need for further political dialogue on the establishment of

the Federation Council and requested continued support from UNAMI. The draft law is currently before the Council of Representatives Legal Committee.

23. National reconciliation, including issues related to disputed internal boundaries, remains the central pillar of the Mission's mandate and a top priority, even more so in the light of the withdrawal of the United States forces from Iraq. UNAMI continues to engage with all relevant parties and discuss confidence-building measures as well as possible next steps to address pending issues, such as power-sharing, voter registry review and elections in Kirkuk, negotiations over the situation in Ninewa and property claims. Unfortunately, it has not been possible for the Standing Consultation Mechanism, which is the main inclusive consultative body on issues related to the disputed internal boundaries, to convene a meeting during the reporting period owing to the ongoing political deadlock. The body has not met since mid-2011.

24. In accordance with the Mission's regional mandate, my Special Representative continued to engage with countries of the region to enhance relations between Iraq and its neighbours. On 12 January, he met with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Jordan, Naser Joudeh. On 16 January, he met with Turkish officials in Ankara. My Special Representative also continues to engage Iraqi and Kuwaiti officials on outstanding issues between the two countries. In that regard, he held regular meetings with the Foreign Minister of Iraq and other senior Iraqi officials.

B. Electoral assistance activities

25. The Council of Representatives has continued the selection of the next board of nine Commissioners of the Independent High Electoral Commission. The term of the current board expires in April 2012. A Committee of Experts, composed of 22 members of the Council of Representatives, was established to assess applications. The Speaker, with broad support from all main political blocs, formally requested UNAMI to participate as an adviser and observer in the process. UNAMI representatives have attended all Committee meetings and advised on selection mechanisms, including the publication of vacancy announcements, evaluation criteria and the processing of complaints. The Committee also took steps, following the recommendation of UNAMI, to allow civil society organizations to observe Committee meetings and to provide regular public updates through press conferences and a dedicated section of the Council of Representatives website.

26. By the deadline of 10 November 2011, the Council of Representatives had received more than 7,300 applications. The Committee divided the initial vetting process into two phases: the first consists in screening applications on the basis of the eligibility criteria stipulated in the Law on the Independent High Electoral Commission, and the second in assessing in more detail the academic, managerial, legal and electoral experience of the applicants. Despite some delays owing to political developments affecting parliamentary sessions, the Committee has continued to work according to the agreed timeline. On 7 February, the Chair of the Committee announced the completion of the first phase of the screening process, during which 4,200 applicants were found eligible. The Chair also made public the criteria for ranking candidates in the second phase and the mechanism for registering complaints. It aims to shortlist the 60 most qualified applicants for interview and final vote by the Council of Representatives by the end of April 2012.

27. The United Nations integrated electoral team, comprising UNAMI, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), working under the overall leadership of UNAMI, continued to provide capacity-building assistance to the Independent High Electoral Commission. Several thematic areas were prioritized on the basis of lessons learned. Selected Commission staff have been undergoing a rigorous training and certification process in order to gain the skills and knowledge needed to develop and maintain the Commission's own software for voter registration and results tabulation. Another group of Commission staff attended a series of training sessions on election reporting and operational data management. Moreover, the United Nations integrated electoral team facilitated the implementation of several institutional capacity-building activities to further improve the Commission's capacity in the areas of graphic design, procurement and public outreach.

28. Following the Kurdistan Regional Government's announcement that Governorate Council elections would be held in the region on 27 September 2012, the Independent High Electoral Commission conducted several planning meetings, with the participation of the United Nations integrated electoral team, to adjust operational timelines in accordance with the election date. UNAMI subsequently encouraged the Commission to clearly delineate roles and responsibilities between its national office and its field offices in the Kurdistan region and to decide on outstanding operational issues in order to allow for timely identification and deployment of United Nations electoral advisers.

C. Human rights activities

Recent developments

29. The number of civilians killed and injured in violent attacks increased during the reporting period. In January, 302 civilians were killed and 931 injured in violent attacks across the country, the highest number of civilian casualties since 2007. Many attacks targeted civilians directly, such as a car bomb on 5 December targeting a religious procession in Hilla, which killed 15 people, including women and children. At least six more civilians were killed in attacks elsewhere in Hilla on the same day. On 22 December, at least 69 people were killed and approximately 200 injured in a coordinated series of bombings across Baghdad. On 4 January, in Baquba, a booby-trapped mobile telephone killed one boy and wounded several others, while another 11 bombs were detonated in the city, killing a six-year old girl and wounding 12 people. On 5 January in Baghdad, two car bombs killed at least 16 people, while in Nassiriya a suicide bomber targeting Shiite pilgrims killed at least 44 people. On 14 January, a suicide bomber in Basra targeted Shiite pilgrims, killing at least 53 people. On the same day, bombs were detonated in Mosul, Tikrit, Baquba and Garma, killing 15. On 27 January, in Baghdad, a suicide bomber targeted a funeral procession, killing at least 31 people and injuring another 60. On 23 February, attacks across Baghdad and other areas of the country left over 62 persons dead and over 200 wounded.

30. From December 2011 to February 2012, there were 80 executions, compared to 68 for January to November 2011. Those executed, most of whom had been convicted under anti-terrorism laws, included one foreign national and at least one woman. UNAMI requested the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Human Rights

and the Higher Judicial Council to provide details concerning individuals executed and the charges on which they had been convicted, but no information has been forthcoming. On 24 January, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights issued a statement expressing concern over trial standards in Iraq and the use of the death penalty, urging the Government of Iraq to suspend its implementation. I also note with concern recent reports of targeted killings of young people, allegedly on account of their look or perception of their sexual orientation. While UNAMI is corroborating these reports, I wish to stress that targeting any individual or group who is exercising its basic human rights and freedoms is a serious crime to be condemned and investigated and it is the duty of the Government to protect those under threat.

31. UNAMI received regular reports of mass arrests under anti-terrorism legislation of individuals accused of being former Baath Party members and of having links to armed opposition groups. Between 20 and 24 November, UNAMI recorded 306 arrests following raids in the Babylon Governorate. Another 300 were reportedly arrested in Diyala Governorate in early December. According to the Higher Judicial Council, by the end of December, more than 842 people had been detained. Reports of arrests continued throughout January and February. UNAMI received allegations from family members that they had not been informed of the place of detention of family members arrested, as well as claims that detainees had been denied access to lawyers and that in some cases they had been forced to sign confessions. The Higher Judicial Council claimed, however, that the investigations were being conducted by investigative judges and general prosecutors in the Central Criminal Court with the presence of lawyers assigned either by the accused themselves or by the courts at public expense. More than 350 of those initially detained were reportedly acquitted of all charges and released by the beginning of January. The remainder are awaiting the outcome of the investigations.

32. The Country Task Force for Monitoring and Reporting on grave violations against children, co-chaired by UNAMI and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), recorded and followed up on 341 incidents in 2011. The majority of the violations documented pertained to recruitment and use of children by armed groups, attacks on schools and hospitals and killing and maiming by improvised explosive devices and complex attacks. Allegations of training and use of children as suicide bombers by Al-Qaeda in Iraq and the Islamic State of Iraq continued to be of particular concern. The Task Force also continued to advocate with the Government of Iraq for the establishment of an inter-ministerial working group to liaise with the United Nations for information-sharing and enhancing a coordinated response to the violations of children's rights. The UNICEF-supported Justice for Children programme continued to support the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in developing a national child protection policy. On 10 December, the first national conference on justice for children took place in Erbil with representatives from the central and local authorities and civil society organizations. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs emphasized the Government's commitment to developing a national plan of action on justice for children as a means to improve prevention and protection.

33. UNAMI welcomed the adoption by the Council of Representatives of a number of laws concerning human rights. On 27 December, the Council of Representatives approved a law concerning social welfare for persons living with HIV/AIDS. On 23 January, the Council ratified the Convention on the Rights of

Persons with Disabilities. On 23 February, it established a National Commission for People with Disabilities. Also on 23 February, the Council approved a law concerning trafficking of persons. The law establishes a Higher Commission for Combating Human Trafficking within the Ministry of the Interior, with representatives from the Governorates, ministries and civil society to oversee implementation of the law. Also on 23 February, the Council of Representatives approved the law for Iraq to accede to the Arab Charter of Human Rights adopted by the League of Arab States in 2004. In the Kurdistan region, the Parliament passed on 31 December a law on the Rights and Privileges of Disabled and People with Special Needs, which was ratified by the President of the Regional Government on 26 January.

34. On another positive note, in December, the National Action Plan on Human Rights was formally adopted by the Government. The plan was discussed at a national conference held in Baghdad in June 2011 and attended by a broad range of Iraqi Government, judicial and civil society representatives. In the Kurdistan region, on 10 January, the Kurdistan Regional Action Plan on Human Rights was formally launched in the presence of a number of key ministers, parliamentarians and civil society activists. My Special Representative attended the launching ceremony, during which he congratulated the Government and people of the region for their achievement and for their engagement in the promotion and protection of human rights.

35. In partnership with UNDP, UNAMI continued to support the Committee of Experts appointed by the Council of Representatives to nominate the Board of Commissioners of the Independent High Commission for Human Rights. The Committee has processed over 3,000 applicants and, in February, interviewed a final shortlist of 54 candidates. The Committee is now in the final stage of nominating the 11 commissioners. On 11 March, my Special Representative and the Speaker of the Council of Representatives attended a meeting of the Committee to demonstrate the importance of the selection process.

36. For International Human Rights Day, on 10 December, my Special Representative presented awards to 10 Iraqi human rights defenders for their outstanding work to promote and protect human rights in Iraq. On 17 December, UNAMI, in collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and in partnership with the Human Rights Committee of the Council of Representatives, held a conference to discuss law and policy reform for enhancing respect for freedom of expression and assembly in Iraq. In December, UNOPS, in partnership with local authorities in 17 Governorates, completed a programme for the protection of detainees and victims of torture for non-governmental organizations and legal and judicial service providers. The programme benefited over 4,600 victims of torture while providing 850 detainees with free legal services. In addition, over 500 prison personnel were trained in prisoners' rights.

Camp New Iraq (formerly Camp Ashraf)

37. In order to prevent violence, which could have resulted from the forcible closure of Camp New Iraq (formerly Camp Ashraf) by the Government of Iraq, UNAMI continued its intensive efforts to find a humanitarian, peaceful and durable solution to the situation of the residents of Camp New Iraq. UNAMI signed a

memorandum of understanding with the Government of Iraq on 25 December providing for the relocation of the residents of Camp New Iraq to a temporary transit location, Camp Hurriya (formerly Camp Liberty), near Baghdad International Airport. Earlier, on 21 December, in response to my request, Prime Minister Al-Maliki extended the deadline for the closure of Camp New Iraq from 31 December 2011 to 30 April 2012.

38. The memorandum of understanding which commits the Government of Iraq to ensuring the safety and security of the residents while in Iraq, respects the sovereignty of Iraq and meets Iraq's international humanitarian and human rights obligations. The Government has diligently mobilized considerable means to prepare the temporary transit location. On 31 January, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) determined that the infrastructure and facilities at Camp Hurriya were in accordance with basic international humanitarian standards, as required by the memorandum of understanding.

39. On 17 February, the first group of 397 residents moved in a peaceful manner from Camp New Iraq to Camp Hurriya under UNAMI monitoring. On 8 March, a second group of 395 residents was peacefully transferred to Camp Hurriya under UNAMI monitoring. Throughout this process, UNAMI, under the leadership of my Special Representative, has continued to act as an impartial facilitator, defusing tensions by addressing a number of provocations and confrontations between the residents and the Iraqi authorities at the embarkation and disembarkation points. This has been a challenging process, particularly as residents have faced difficulties adapting to their new accommodation in Camp Hurriya. The Iraqi authorities, who have demonstrated considerable professionalism and patience, are addressing the humanitarian and logistical concerns of the residents of Camp Hurriya through daily interaction with them on camp management, under United Nations monitoring.

40. UNHCR completed the verification of the first group and has started refugee status determination interviews in accordance with the memorandum of understanding. This is an essential step to prepare the submissions of eligible candidates for resettlement to third countries, an important component of a durable solution. UNHCR will convene a conference of prospective resettlement countries on 23 March in Geneva. In addition, UNHCR, UNAMI and UNOPS are planning to launch a flash appeal to fund activities related to the relocation, monitoring, verification, refugee status determination and search for durable solutions for residents of Camp New Iraq.

D. Technical preparations for the census

41. Together with UNAMI, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) continued to work with the Government of Iraq in support of the planned national census, but there was no progress during the reporting period. UNAMI and UNFPA held discussions with the World Bank to conduct, in the first half of 2012, a large-scale survey of 500,000 households that will provide demographic information while serving as a tool for local-level poverty mapping.

E. Development and humanitarian assistance

42. The United Nations country team continues to support the implementation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for 2011-2014 in partnership with the Government of Iraq and in alignment with the National Development Plan for 2010-2014. The Ministry of Planning has initiated a preparatory process for reviewing and updating the National Development Plan to ensure that the development process in the country remains aligned with evolving national priorities. Through the Government's high-level Partnership Committee, the United Nations continued to support the Prime Minister's advisory commission in establishing Government-led thematic working groups to coordinate development programming.

43. To date, the $1.9 billion UNDAF for Iraq is only 32.2 per cent funded, which means a shortfall of approximately $1.3 billion to be mobilized to maintain development momentum in Iraq. The Iraq UNDAF Fund has received contributions of approximately $15 million and needs additional donor funding to support UNDAF implementation. On 18 January, the Fund's steering committee reviewed and approved three development initiatives totalling $8.9 million that will contribute to addressing governance and human rights issues in Iraq.

44. The Government of Iraq has continued to take a responsible role in leading the national development process and has allocated $85 million in the 2012 budget to co-finance projects in partnership with the international community, including United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. Also, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General/Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator formalized a $2.1 million co-financing agreement with the Kurdistan Regional Government on 1 February. In addition, UNDP recently signed a memorandum of understanding with Royal Dutch Shell concerning partnership in socio-economic development activities for local communities in areas where the company operates.

45. At its twelfth meeting, held on 18 January in Baghdad, the Donor Committee of the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq reviewed the progress of programmes and projects approved under the United Nations Development Group Iraq Trust Fund and reviewed the findings of the Iraq Trust Fund lessons learned Exercise. Of the 200 programmes and projects approved under the Iraq Trust Fund, totalling $1.4 billion, 51 are currently operational and contribute directly to achieving development results within UNDAF.

46. In collaboration with the Central Statistics Organization and the Kurdistan region statistical office, the United Nations country team launched the findings of the Iraq Knowledge Network survey on 3 December in Baghdad. It was the first comprehensive socio-economic household survey conducted in Iraq since 2007. Socio-economic statistics collected from approximately 29,000 households in all 18 Governorates will set a baseline to establish a socio-economic monitoring system for Iraq. This will enhance evidence-based planning at the national, provincial and local levels and enable the Government and partners to monitor and track progress on the Millennium Development Goals.

47. The second phase of the Local Area Development Programme, a joint effort led by UNDP with support from the International Labour Organization, UNOPS, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO), was endorsed by the Government of Iraq on

19 December. The joint programme supports capacity development of local authorities to deliver services with a view to institutionalizing participatory, inclusive, gender-based and integrated planning, budgeting and implementation. Oversight is provided through the establishment of gender advisers in pilot Governorates. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations provided technical support to the Government of Iraq to establish a policy and strategy unit within the Ministry of Agriculture to provide guidance on operational, technical and technological aspects of agriculture, which, in turn, will enable the Government to further promote agricultural reform.

48. UN-Women continued to provide technical support for the integration of gender in the Iraq public sector modernization programme, which is supported by UNDP, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, UNICEF, UNESCO, UN-Habitat and UNFPA. The intention is to create a gender-responsive and inclusive policy and decision-making environment in Iraq. This includes support for drafting relevant legislation, including a national strategy to advance women's rights and a domestic violence bill, as well as a programme to address violence against women in collaboration with UNFPA and UNHCR.

49. The high proportion of youth in the population poses both a challenge and an opportunity for political, social and economic development in Iraq. In coordination with the Ministry of Youth and Sports, UNFPA is supporting the preparation of a national youth strategy, involving Iraqi youth and their representative organizations, which will be launched during the second half of 2012. UNDP is leading the United Nations country team's support for the preparation of the third national human development report, with a focus on youth, which will be launched in 2013.

50. In January and February, UNESCO, UNICEF and the Government of Iraq conducted four workshops to improve the quality of education at all levels within the framework of the project entitled "Completion of a comprehensive assessment of education sector for Iraq". The workshops, held in Erbil, trained 140 educational statisticians and planners from the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research and universities across the country on qualitative indicators, data collection tools and analytical methods as a means to formulate educational plans focused on improving the quality of education.

51. WHO has supported a range of activities with lasting impacts on the health status of all population groups in the country, including development of institutional and human capacities for effective planning, management and use of data management systems; awareness raising and support for patient safety practices; preparation of technical studies to assess congenital birth defects; and development of an action plan to improve anaesthetic and intensive care services in Iraq. UNICEF, WHO and UNFPA are supporting the Ministry of Health in finalizing the national strategy on reproductive and mother-and-child health. WHO and UNICEF have supported the implementation of the first national micronutrient deficiencies assessment and response survey to review the overall micronutrient status of various population groups.

52. In accordance with the Mission's regional mandate, the UNAMI liaison office in Tehran, established in 2010, has been working closely with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Government of Iraq to facilitate enhanced exchanges and cooperation on bilateral issues of mutual interest to both Governments, including those related to the environment (combating sandstorms)

and border demining. Most recently, the liaison office facilitated technical consultations through result-oriented missions to Tehran by officials from the United Nations country team.

53. In close coordination with the Government of Iraq and non-governmental organizations, UNHCR continued to support persons of concern under its mandate. According to the Ministry of Displacement and Migration, an estimated 1.3 million people are still displaced within Iraq, among them some 467,565 persons living in 382 settlements on public land or buildings in harsh conditions. Together with UN-Habitat, UNHCR continues to work with the Government to find a durable solution to the problem of displacement through urban planning and land allocation. UNHCR is also liaising with the Ministry and the Council of Representatives Committee on Displacement to try to halt the eviction of displaced families from settlements and to define fair compensation when evictions cannot be delayed.

54. The return of internally displaced and refugee families to their place of origin or to other locations in Iraq has continued. During 2011, 193,610 internally displaced persons and 67,080 refugees were registered with the Government as permanent returnees. To improve returnees' access to protection safety nets, UNHCR has continued to provide legal services, shelters and non-food items across Iraq.

55. The Syrian Arab Republic continues to host the largest number of Iraqi refugees, of whom 101,905 have been registered by UNHCR. My Deputy Special Representative has continued to monitor the situation to ensure the readiness of the United Nations to respond to the needs of any population movements across the Syrian border into Iraq. The country team has developed a contingency plan to address an eventual influx of Syrian refugees or returning Iraqis.

IV. Security and operational issues

56. Although the number of reported attacks has decreased during the reporting period, the overall security situation in Iraq remained tense. The sophistication and impact of recorded attacks are significant, requiring the full attention of the Iraqi security forces, which are striving to strengthen their capacity and advance at a steady pace towards normalization. The risks posed to the United Nations by threats such as abduction, terrorist attack and indirect fire remain high, requiring the Organization to adopt and implement substantial mitigation measures to ensure an adequate level of security for its staff, assets and operations. In this regard, the United Nations has taken proactive steps in the light of the withdrawal of United States forces. Positive cooperation has taken place between the Government of Iraq and the United Nations with regard to the security of United Nations staff, assets and operations.

57. Shortly after UNAMI was established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1500 (2003), the United Nations commenced negotiations with the Government of Iraq on a status-of-mission agreement for UNAMI. Those negotiations were successfully concluded, and an agreement was signed on 3 June 2005. Thereafter, at the request of the Government and in the light of the changed circumstances in the country since then, the United Nations and the Government have been negotiating a new status-of-mission agreement since 2008. During the reporting period, UNAMI

has continued to actively follow up on this issue but, so far, these efforts have not come to a satisfactory conclusion.

58. Despite earlier indications that the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) had secured funding for one year of operations, UNHAS was forced to cease its operations in Iraq on 9 February owing to the non-materialization of commitments for funding made by donors. With the drawdown of the UNAMI office in Amman and the increased in-country presence of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, adequate air transport capability is needed to avoid any adverse impact on the implementation of key programmes in support of the Government of Iraq. In this regard, a joint United Nations Headquarters and regional aviation safety team conducted an assessment mission in January to explore options to ensure continued air transport services. Such options include the use of commercial airline services, securing a second fixed-wing aircraft and borrowing an aircraft from another mission.

59. In line with the country team's increased presence in Iraq, the United Nations has enhanced its capacity to accommodate international staff in Baghdad. Discussions are ongoing with the Government of Iraq on the use of its $50 million contribution to the trust fund established for renovation of United Nations integrated compound in Baghdad. Similar projects to expand accommodation capacity for international staff have either taken place or are under way in Erbil, Basra, Baghdad International Airport and Kirkuk. Efforts by UNAMI to ensure self-reliance have included the establishment of contracts for the provision of catering, cleaning and laundry services, short-term provision of fuel and enhancement of perimeter and internal security in all United Nations compounds pending more long-term arrangements. Each regional office has also been provided with armoured vehicles and a level I medical facility.

V. Observations

60. Following the completion of the withdrawal of the United States forces, Iraq has entered a new chapter in its history. Despite the many difficulties along the way, the Iraqi people have been steadfast in their commitment to rebuilding a country that has suffered from decades of war, sanctions and economic decline. Following two national elections as well as the adoption of a Constitution, and the holding of provincial elections, the Iraqi people should be proud of their achievements in building a young democracy in the Arab world.

61. The current political situation, however, underscores the many outstanding issues that have yet to be resolved in order to achieve national reconciliation. I am concerned that if these issues are not addressed in a meaningful way, through an inclusive dialogue, they could lead to renewed political tensions and adversely impact the security situation in the country. I therefore urge the Iraqi political leaders to seize this opportunity and work in a spirit of national unity towards delivering a peaceful and prosperous future for Iraq.

62. In this context, the national conference proposed by President Talabani could provide an important opportunity to bring the current stalemate to an end and set in motion a dialogue that could address outstanding political differences. I urge all concerned to redouble their efforts to make this conference a success and ensure that it is held in a spirit of inclusiveness, compromise and partnership, within the

framework of the Constitution. UNAMI stands ready to lend all the necessary support to such an initiative.

63. I believe that an improvement in issues pertaining to the disputed internal boundaries remains central to Iraq's future stability. However, the current political deadlock is hindering efforts to resolve these and other related issues. I regret that the standing consultative mechanism, which has been a useful forum to bring key stakeholders together to address such issues under the auspices of UNAMI, has been unable to reconvene for the time being. I therefore urge the Iraqi leaders to reaffirm their commitment to resolve pending Arab-Kurdish issues and work together, with the support of UNAMI, to build trust and find common ground.

64. I welcome the progress made in the appointment of a new Board of Commissioners of the Independent High Electoral Commission with a view to the completion of the selection process by April 2012, as stipulated in the electoral law. In that regard, I welcome the steps taken by the Committee of Experts of the Council of Representatives to agree on a set of criteria for evaluating applications and to promote transparency, including through the publication of Committee proceedings and the participation of civil society organizations. I strongly encourage the Iraqi authorities to continue to adhere to a timely, transparent and credible selection process. I would also like to reiterate the commitment of the United Nations to supporting a smooth transition and to provide capacity-building assistance to the Electoral Commission as it embarks on a busy electoral calendar.

65. I am encouraged that Iraq and Kuwait remain committed to normalizing their relations and resolving all outstanding issues. In this regard, I welcome the recent visit by Prime Minister Al-Maliki to Kuwait and the constructive discussions on addressing Iraq's outstanding obligations under relevant Security Council resolutions, as well as bilateral issues. The planned second meeting of the Joint Ministerial Committee in April 2012 is an important opportunity to address all outstanding issues and ensure proper implementation of agreements reached. Iraq's decisive steps to fulfil all its remaining obligations under relevant Security Council resolutions continue to be essential in ensuring Iraq's return to the international standing it held prior to 1990. To this end, the United Nations is committed to providing all the necessary assistance and my Special Representative is ready to facilitate mutually acceptable solutions in this regard.

66. I am pleased by the announcement that the next League of Arab States summit will be held in Baghdad on 29 March. It is an important recognition of the role that Iraq plays in the region. It also underscores how far Iraq has come in reintegrating itself into the Arab world. I would urge member States of the League to use this opportunity to begin a new sustained engagement with Iraq.

67. Notwithstanding the general improvement in the security situation in recent years, I remain concerned by the high level of attacks on civilians, which continue to take place on an almost daily basis. I am also concerned by the continued and increased implementation of the death penalty in the country. I therefore once again urge the Iraqi authorities to establish a moratorium on the use of the death penalty, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 62/149.

68. I welcome recent efforts aimed at strengthening the human rights legislative and institutional framework in Iraq, including the adoption of legislation by the Council of Representatives to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with

Disabilities and the adoption of the National Action Plan on Human Rights. I call upon the Government of Iraq to take further steps to ensure that the fundamental rights and freedoms of all Iraqis are protected. To that end, it is important to establish the Independent High Commission for Human Rights without further delay.

69. I am encouraged that peaceful and orderly transfers from Camp New Iraq to Camp Hurriya have commenced. While I welcome the cooperation of the Government of Iraq and the residents, I would like to remind them of the need to continue to engage in this process in a spirit of goodwill and good faith. I remain concerned by the possibility of escalation and violence, which must be avoided and would be unacceptable. I wish to reiterate that the Government of Iraq bears the primary responsibility for the security of the residents, who must also fully abide by the laws of Iraq.

70. I welcome the beginning of the refugee status determination of the residents of Camp Hurriya, a time-consuming process, and I urge Member States to swiftly offer resettlement opportunities to eligible residents and to continue to support the efforts of UNAMI and UNHCR by providing the necessary financial assistance for the conduct of United Nations activities. It is essential that the three steps, relocation, refugee status determination and resettlement, take place concurrently to achieve a durable solution to this humanitarian issue. The United Nations will continue to lend all the necessary support to this process, pursuant to the memorandum of understanding of 25 December 2011.

71. The Iraqi people are looking to their leaders to do more to address the urgent development challenges that face the country, especially with respect to the delivery of essential services and the repair of infrastructure. In this regard, I welcome the Government's continued commitment to taking a responsible role in leading the national development process. I am particularly appreciative that the authorities have approved an allocation of $85 million in the 2012 budget to co-finance projects in partnership with the international community, including the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, in furtherance of the implementation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Iraq. I call upon Member States to further contribute to the Fund to foster the implementation of development programmes so crucial to Iraq's future.

72. The high number of displaced persons within Iraq, many of whom are living in harsh conditions, remains a cause for concern. I encourage the Government to continue to work with the United Nations to find a durable solution to the problem of displacement through urban planning and land allocation. I am also concerned that a further deterioration of the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic could have an impact on Iraq and lead to an outflow of refugees or seriously affect the estimated 1 million Iraqi refugees who currently reside in the Syrian Arab Republic.

73. As the United Nations remains fully committed to supporting the Government and the people of Iraq, the continuing absence of a status-of-mission agreement for UNAMI adversely affects the ability of the Mission and the United Nations to carry out their mandated activities. I understand that the Government is very close to completing its internal review of the draft agreement. I urge the Government and the relevant Iraqi authorities to take the necessary steps to ensure that the agreement can be brought into force without further delay.

74. Following the withdrawal of the United States forces from Iraq, the United Nations continues its transition to logistical and security self-reliance. I should like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the Iraqi security forces for the security support they are providing to the United Nations premises and personnel.

75. Finally, I wish to thank my Special Representative, Martin Kobler, and all United Nations staff serving in Iraq, for their steadfast commitment and dedication to furthering stability and progress in the country.

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Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2000 (2011), by which the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) until 31 July 2012, and requested me, in paragraph 19, to provide a special report, no later than 31 March 2012, with recommendations on possible adjustments in the structure and strength of UNOCI, taking into account the holding of the legislative elections, prevailing security challenges and progress in rebuilding national capacities. The report covers developments since the report of 30 December 2011 (S/2011/807) and includes the findings and recommendations of an assessment mission to Côte d'Ivoire.

II. Update on major developments

Political

2. Further to the legislative elections held on 11 December 2011, the Prime Minister and Minister for Defence, Guillaume Soro, resigned from the Government on 8 March 2012, together with his Cabinet. The first meeting of the new National Assembly took place on 12 March in Yamoussoukro, during which two members of the Rassemblement des républicains (RDR) party, the outgoing Prime Minister, Guillaume Soro, and Sarah Sako-Fadika, were elected as President of the Assembly and Vice-President, respectively. On 13 March, President Alassane Ouattara appointed a new Government, headed by Jeannot Ahoussou-Kouadio from the Parti démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI), who will also serve as Minister for Justice, while the President will serve as the Minister for Defence.

3. During the reporting period, opposition political parties continued to realign their structures and form coalitions as a result of divergent views on engagement with the Government. This resulted in the creation of the Ligue des mouvements pour le progrès (LMP) and Agir pour la paix et la nation (APN) platforms. On 27 January, the main opposition coalition, the Congrès national de la résistance pour la démocratie (CNRD), elected a new leadership and former CNRD Secretary-General, Simone Gbagbo, was replaced by Marthe Amon Ago, the former Vice-President of the National Assembly.

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4. The Front populaire ivoirien (FPI) party held a meeting in Abidjan on 21 January, during which a clash erupted when elements affiliated to the ruling coalition, the Rassemblement des houphouëtistes pour la démocratie et la paix (RHDP), attempted to disrupt the meeting. One person was killed, several were injured and property was damaged, while FPI members assaulted national police officers, accusing them of inaction. UNOCI used tear gas to disperse the demonstrators. No major incident was reported on 18 February, when some 500 supporters attended another FPI meeting at CNRD headquarters in Abidjan, at which UNOCI forces were also present. The future of FPI as a party was reportedly discussed on 6 February, when the interim President of FPI visited former President Laurent Gbagbo at the International Criminal Court in The Hague, the Netherlands. On 8 March, the interim Secretary-General of FPI was briefly detained upon his return from Ghana.

5. Further to the announcement of the provisional results of the legislative elections, on 15 December 2011, by the Independent Electoral Commission, the Constitutional Council announced, on 31 January, the cancellation of the results in 11 of the 205 electoral districts. In keeping with his certification mandate, on 17 February, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire certified the legislative elections in the 193 electoral districts for which the national authorities had proclaimed the final results.

6. Repeat elections were held, on 26 February, in the 11 electoral districts in which results had been cancelled. Elections were also conducted in a district where polling had not taken place on 11 December, owing to the death of a candidate.

7. Polling took place in a generally peaceful atmosphere, except in two districts in western Côte d'Ivoire. In Bonon district, after the polling stations closed, UNOCI peacekeepers escorting the transport of result sheets to the office of the Independent Electoral Commission in Bonon were attacked by unidentified armed individuals. Later that night, peacekeepers repelled an attack by armed individuals against the electoral office in Bonon and extricated UNOCI and Ivorian polling staff to another location. The office was later ransacked and some electoral materials, including result sheets, were stolen. An investigation is being conducted into five deaths, which were reported in Bonon that day. In Facobly district, the result sheets for several polling stations were stolen by armed elements.

8. With the exception of the Bonon and Facobly districts, on 28 February, the Independent Electoral Commission announced the provisional results of the repeat elections in the other 10 districts. Further to the proclamation of the final results by the Constitutional Council on 7 March, the Special Representative certified the elections for these 10 districts, on 9 March.

9. President Ouattara continued to take measures to strengthen regional and international cooperation. During the period under review, he attended the eighteenth summit of the African Union, held in Addis Ababa, in January 2012; received the Secretary of State of the United States of America, in Côte d'Ivoire; and paid a State visit to France, during which a new defence agreement was signed. On 17 February, President Ouattara was elected Chair of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States during a summit in Abuja, Nigeria. A delegation of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the African Development Bank and the West African Economic and Monetary Union visited Côte d'Ivoire for two weeks in March to assess progress

made towards meeting the country's debt obligations under the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative.

10. National and international prosecutions continued. On 22 February, Pre-Trial Chamber III of the International Criminal Court in The Hague decided to expand the scope of its investigation to crimes committed in Côte d'Ivoire since 2002. In Côte d'Ivoire, the military tribunal reopened in Abidjan and started hearings on 2 March against 134 former Forces de défense et de sécurité and police elements for crimes committed during the crisis, as well as against nine members of the Forces républicaines de Côte d'Ivoire (FRCI).

Security

11. While the security situation has generally improved, incidents by various perpetrators continued to take place throughout the country, highlighting the vulnerability of civilians. Security incidents and human rights violations continued to be committed by FRCI elements. They were reportedly involved in clashes between communities in Arrah in eastern Côte d'Ivoire from 11 to 13 February, resulting in the deaths of three people and injuries to at least 19. Other incidents took place: on 27 February in Abidjan, where one youth was killed when FRCI elements responded to an incident; on 29 February in Séguéla, when a FRCI element fired shots in a crowd, killing two civilians; and on 3 March near Daloa, as a result of a FRCI element firing shots during a dispute between two villagers, seriously injuring one of them.

12. In response to such incidents, the Government took important measures to improve security and curb ill-discipline in the security forces. It reactivated the military police and deployed units in Abidjan and Bouaké; another unit is planned to deploy in Daloa. Efforts also continued to return FRCI personnel to barracks and to create a mixed unit to fight racketeering. At the same time, FRCI strengthened its deployment in the west, while another battalion will be deployed in the area bordering Ghana.

13. Violent attacks and armed robberies by unidentified armed elements also resulted in a number of civilian deaths and injuries. Three separate incidents were reported on the Bouaké-Katiola road, on 3 and 19 February and 8 March, when unidentified armed elements attacked vehicles, killing seven persons and injuring many more. During an attack by unidentified armed elements on 9 February, in the Zibabo Yablo village near Duékoué, unidentified armed elements killed three civilians, while some 400 people were displaced and over 25 houses burned. On 19 February, two persons were killed and others injured when a group of persons were attacked by unidentified armed elements on their way to a political meeting in the western part of the country. On 21 February, five unidentified armed elements attacked the village of Zriglo in the border area with Liberia, killing six persons and wounding many more.

14. The first months of the year also witnessed an increase in violent confrontations between communities, mostly in the west, including in Petit Guiglo on 4 January, in Dobia on 5 January, in Toa Zeo near Duékoué on 6 January and near Gagnoa on 15 January, resulting in the deaths of 16 people, injuries to many more and the burning of several houses. Four persons were wounded near Daloa during a confrontation between the local population and dozos (traditional hunters) on 7 January, while four people were killed in Tuého village near Man on

16 February, allegedly in retaliation for the prior killing of two nationals of Burkina Faso in a neighbouring village. Clashes were also reported around Abidjan, in Guéhiébly on 6 January and Ayamé on 9 January, resulting in the destruction of property. On 5 March, in Agboville near Abidjan, five people were injured when dozos violently intervened in a private matter.

15. There were also reports of confrontations between farmers and cattle breeders in Béoumi near Bouaké in the north, which started on 4 January and spread to the neighbouring villages of Konsou, Gnabra and Zedekan on 22 January, to Wawasidanet and Ndolisakissou on 26 January and to Odiénné in early February. Another confrontation occurred on 20 January in Touba in the north-western part of the country, spreading to a number of neighbouring villages and resulting in injuries to several persons and the displacement of some 200 people.

III. Assessment mission

16. Further to Security Council resolution 2000 (2011), I deployed an assessment mission to Côte d'Ivoire, from 6 to 17 February, to develop recommendations on possible adjustments to the structure and strength of UNOCI, taking into account the holding of the legislative elections, the prevailing security challenges and progress made in rebuilding national capacities. Participants included representatives of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, which also led the mission, the Department of Field Support, the United Nations Office for West Africa, the Department of Safety and Security, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Development Group.

17. The assessment mission received detailed briefings from UNOCI and the United Nations country team and consulted a wide range of national and international stakeholders, including members of the Government; the leadership of the national security agencies and armed forces; the Licorne forces; representatives of the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission; international and regional partners; political parties, including the former ruling FPI party; civil society; and non-governmental organizations. Members of the mission also visited a number of locations throughout the country, and a special assessment was undertaken in the border areas in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, together with representatives from UNOCI, the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and the United Nations country teams in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia.

18. The discussions of the assessment mission with Government officials, including former Prime Minister Guillaume Soro, ministers and the Director of the Cabinet of President Ouattara, as well as other national and international stakeholders, highlighted the significant progress made since the last assessment, in May 2011, particularly owing to initiatives undertaken by the Government. There was a visible improvement in the situation, with a gradual return to normalcy. Banks have reopened and economic activity is accelerating, while the security situation has improved in Abidjan. Legislative elections took place in a generally peaceful manner, civil servants have returned to work and many displaced persons and refugees have returned to their homes. The President strengthened regional and international cooperation and established the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The discussions also confirmed that the priorities identified by the

Government, which were outlined in the twenty-eighth report, of 24 June 2011 (S/2011/387), remain valid.

19. This notable progress notwithstanding, interlocutors stressed that the country continues to face important challenges and significant threats, in particular with respect to the overall security situation. All interlocutors characterized the security situation as fragile, and some felt that the challenges risk reversing the progress made since the end of the post-election crisis. Government and other interlocutors also expressed concern about such emerging subregional threats as drug trafficking, piracy and organized crime, as well as spillover from instability in neighbouring countries, while underscoring the limited capacity of the Ivorian security agencies to address them.

20. National interlocutors stressed that UNOCI presence in the country remained indispensable and that any reduction of its activities would be premature. They particularly emphasized that a continued robust presence by UNOCI peacekeepers in support of the Government was vital to address prevailing security challenges and threats to the country's stability.

A. Security situation

21. Although security has improved in Abidjan, it was assessed that threats have become more diffuse and the security situation has deteriorated in other parts of Côte d'Ivoire, where State authority is weak and large numbers of weapons are in circulation. In spite of measures taken by the Government to improve discipline within the armed forces, FRCI continues to face challenges and lacks cohesion. The future of the approximately 40,000 elements associated with FRCI — most of them recruited on an ad hoc basis during and towards the end of the crisis — is uncertain. There is also a growing concern about potential destabilization from elements affiliated to former President Gbagbo, who had fled, during and after the crisis, to countries in the subregion.

22. There were also an increasing number of clashes between communities throughout the country, which have a potential to escalate into larger-scale conflicts as long as the underlying root causes, particularly land tenure, are not addressed. The return of refugees is likely to further exacerbate existing tensions. The proliferation of weapons has contributed to a higher incidence of violent crimes, such as armed robberies, looting and racketeering, including by FRCI and armed elements.

23. The situation remains particularly fragile in western Côte d'Ivoire, where large numbers of weapons, armed elements, former combatants, militias and dozos, as well as competition over the control of resources are significant sources of insecurity. Most of the incidents occurred in the west, although insecurity has increased in other parts of the country. Law enforcement, while present throughout the country, remains ineffective, and some areas are still under the protection of the dozos, which increases insecurity.

24. The situation with respect to the dozos has become a matter of concern as a result of the recent crisis and the proliferation of weapons. Reportedly, there now are some 10,000 elements claiming to be or perceived as dozos, while prior to the crisis there were only 1,000, creating fear and confusion among the local

population. Some posing as dozos use automatic weapons, while traditionally, dozos were armed only with spears or long hunting rifles.

Security situation in the border areas

25. Côte d'Ivoire's borders remain porous and largely uncontrolled. The situation in the immediate border area with Liberia is of particular concern, as the continued presence of armed elements, including former combatants, and of weapons, as well as uncontrolled cross-border movements and illicit trafficking, continue to threaten the stability of Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia and the entire subregion. Illegal mining in the border areas has also led to cross-border incidents.

26. National authorities in both Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia have limited capacity to control effectively the movement of people and goods and address security challenges along the border, which stretches over more than 700 km and is often inaccessible as a result of poor roads, dense vegetation and river banks, and most crossings take place through unofficial entry points. The assessment mission visited two official border crossing points, and noted that Liberian immigration officers and other national security personnel were present on the Liberia side, while there was little evidence of an immigration or border management structure on the Côte d'Ivoire side.

27. Despite the political will expressed at the highest levels in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, so far no national strategy has been developed in either country to address, in a more comprehensive manner, border security and the issue of Ivorian and Liberian former combatants. Relevant Ivorian and Liberian civilian and security authorities at the local level generally have limited cooperation mechanisms and have contact on an ad hoc basis or in the context of operations organized by the peacekeeping operations.

28. The assessment mission also met returnees in Côte d'Ivoire as well as Ivorian refugees in camps in Liberia. The refugees cited lack of security and confidence in national authorities, limited access to land, loss of property, the absence of return assistance and slow progress in repatriation assistance as factors preventing them from returning to their areas of origin in western Côte d'Ivoire. However, to date the majority of refugees have spontaneously returned from Liberia to Côte d'Ivoire, although some 70,000 Ivorian refugees remain in Liberia, including about 50 per cent in host communities. The decrease of food assistance to refugees between December 2011 and February 2012, as a result of funding shortages, placed further strain on refugees, host communities and returnees and increased uncontrolled cross-border movements of refugees.

29. Some refugees in the camps closely affiliated with the former regime, including ex-combatants who seem to exert some control over refugees, questioned the legitimacy of the outcome of the 2010 presidential election and the current Government. The lack of capacity of the Liberian Government has challenged its ability to effectively screen arriving refugees, including for the presence of former combatants, and it would need increased support to do so.

30. Groups of former combatants who sought refuge in Liberia during or after the crisis seem to have maintained some of their networks. They are also believed to remain within host communities in the border area, which are primarily composed of people of the same ethnic groups and often include close family relations.

31. The whereabouts of the estimated 3,000 foreign combatants that entered Côte d'Ivoire during the crisis, mainly from Liberia, are unknown, although some are believed to be in the refugee population. Others did not return to their home countries and are believed to have stayed in Côte d'Ivoire or along the border. Weapons caches have also been reported in the border areas between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia. Although some weapons have been found there, there are indications that this is a small fraction of the weapons that are believed to be hidden in the border area.

32. A total of 88 suspected armed elements, mainly from Côte d'Ivoire, were detained in Liberia in April 2011, of whom two Ivorians remain in detention, as well as three suspected Liberian mercenaries. The other detainees were released on 13 March. In addition, since June 2011, 43 persons, including 39 Ivorians, have been in pretrial detention in Zwedru on charges of mercenarism, while in January 2012, a second group of 73 Ivorians was arrested and detained on the same charges, but was released on 20 February.

33. All interlocutors recognized the regional dimension of most of the security challenges that Côte d'Ivoire is facing and stressed the need for increased cooperation in the subregion to address them. Interlocutors also stressed the importance of building on existing regional mechanisms, including the Economic Community of West African States Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition, and Other Related Materials, the Regional Action Plan of ECOWAS to Address the Growing Problem of Illicit Drug Trafficking, Organized Crime and Drug Abuse in West Africa and the related West Africa Coast Initiative, as well as initiatives spearheaded by the countries of the Mano River Union, to address the growing problem of illicit trafficking and drug abuse, while national capacities are developed. Subregional aspects should also be taken into account when addressing issues of youth unemployment, land tenure issues, early recovery and humanitarian assistance, reconciliation and community security and disarmament. Some interlocutors were of the view that the gradual normalization of the situation in Côte d'Ivoire, as well as President Ouattara's chairmanship of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS, could constitute an important window of opportunity to tackle these security threats and emerging threats to the subregion.

Staff safety and security

34. The safety and security of United Nations personnel has improved since the end of the post-election crisis. However, challenges persist, in particular owing to the volatile security situation and the limited capacity of the Ivorian security forces to ensure effective protection of the population and of United Nations personnel. United Nations personnel and property are mostly confronted with crime, especially armed robberies and burglaries.

B. Political situation and prospects for reconciliation

35. Although results are outstanding in two electoral districts, the first meeting of the new National Assembly took place in March. The Assembly will play an important role in representing the people and ensuring more democratic governance,

including through passing legislation for key reforms and addressing the root causes of the crisis, such as land tenure.

36. National authorities also reiterated their commitment to holding local elections later in 2012, which could be an important opportunity to widen the political spectrum and strengthen governance at the local level. On 7 March, the Government revoked six decrees issued between 2001 and 2010 relating to the creation of close to 1,000 new communes, resulting in a return to the initial number of 197, which existed when the last municipal elections took place in 2000. National authorities stressed the need for the United Nations, including UNOCI, to provide logistical support for these elections.

37. The political landscape in Côte d'Ivoire is polarized, with marginal representation of opposition parties in the National Assembly. Most interlocutors stressed that reaching some form of political accommodation would therefore be important.

38. While many members of the former ruling party remained in exile, rifts developed among the opposition in the country. Although some have stated their willingness to engage with the Government and to participate in the local elections, FPI continues to impose conditions for doing so, including the release of all high-level FPI officials from detention, the lifting of arrest warrants against those in exile and the unblocking of frozen assets. In meetings with the assessment mission, representatives of the political opposition raised concerns about acts of reprisals and attacks against them by elements of FRCI because of their political and ethnic affiliations, including arbitrary arrest and killings. Some were of the view that UNOCI did not do enough to protect them from the Ivorian security forces, especially during demonstrations. They expressed concern about the lack of political space for the opposition and what they perceive as an absence of freedom of assembly and expression. They also stressed the need for the Government to make efforts towards promoting justice for crimes committed by all sides during the crisis and to curb corruption within their ranks.

39. On the other hand, representatives of the ruling coalition noted that many in the opposition continued to question the legitimacy of the President and his Government. It was also found that State media had improved in terms of professional standards and impartiality, in comparison with the period before and during the crisis, although some private media affiliated to the opposition continued to publish inflammatory statements.

Reconciliation and social cohesion

40. The Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission commenced its work under the leadership of former Prime Minister Charles Konan Banny, with the support of regional and international partners. In spite of some initial consultative meetings in the western and eastern part of the country, its activities have so far concentrated on Abidjan, although the Commission plans to increase its activities at the local level, including through the establishment of 36 local commissions. At the local level, early warning and sensitization committees, created under the authority of the Ministry of the Interior and comprised of traditional leaders, local authorities, political parties and civil society, have been instrumental in addressing local conflicts and easing tensions in a number of locations.

41. In spite of these efforts, meaningful reconciliation at any level has yet to progress. The root causes of instability remain unaddressed and issues surrounding citizenship, access to land, the control of natural resources and unbalanced socio-economic development and unemployment, particularly for youth, continue to fuel local conflicts across the country, leading to clashes between communities. The United Nations continued to support reconciliation efforts at the national and local levels, while also pursuing community security and violence reduction initiatives.

C. Human rights and transitional justice

42. Serious human rights violations, including: summary executions; torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; rape; arbitrary arrest and illegal detention; extortion and the seizure of private properties; and illegal occupation of private premises, continue to be committed by armed elements, including from FRCI and associated untrained armed elements, dozos and other armed elements. Women and children continue to be the subject of sexual- and gender-based violence, while overall the situation of children remains of concern. Impunity continues, partly as a result of shortcomings in the judicial system, including lack of resources and limited access to justice.

43. The Government has established judicial and non-judicial mechanisms to facilitate accountability, most importantly the special investigation cell and the national commission of inquiry, whose composition and working methods have faced some national and international criticism. There are concerns that the Commission of Inquiry is finalizing its report without having documented all relevant crimes through comprehensive investigation. Government interlocutors stressed that promoting and protecting human rights remained a priority, along with developing a fair and equitable justice system, which was important for reconciliation.

44. To date, all 148 persons charged by national prosecutors with crimes committed during the post-election crisis are from or affiliated with the regime of former President Gbagbo. This has further contributed to the perception of "one-sided justice" and prevailing impunity. However, the decision of Pre-Trial Chamber III of the International Criminal Court of 22 February to expand the scope of its investigation to crimes committed in Côte d'Ivoire since 2002 was perceived by segments of the population, notably the political opposition, as a step towards applying justice in a more even-handed manner.

D. Humanitarian situation and economic recovery

45. Although the majority of people displaced during the crisis have returned home, several hundred thousand remain vulnerable. One hundred thousand people are still displaced in the country (of which 11,700 are in camps) and 96,000 Ivorians remain refugees in neighbouring countries, of whom some 70,000 are in Liberia. Insufficient return and livelihood assistance as a result of funding constraints and lack of access to basic services hamper sustainable returns, particularly in the west where humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable populations and displaced persons is still critical. Returns are also likely to further exacerbate tensions unless they are mitigated through progress towards stabilization, disarmament,

reconciliation and access to basic social services, as well as addressing impunity and the root causes of the conflict, including land tenure issues. Funding for humanitarian activities is likely to remain a major challenge, which risks further affecting food security. While humanitarian aid continues to be coordinated mainly by an international structure, efforts are under way to progressively move it to Government-led coordination and to align it with a national development plan for 2012 to 2015, which is being prepared by the Government.

Economic recovery

46. Progress has been achieved at the macroeconomic level. In addition, efforts are under way to improve livelihood conditions, access to basic services, conditions for sustainable return and local capacities. The development of a national development plan is an important step in this regard. At the same time, enhanced partnerships, including with the private sector, and coordination will be necessary to complement the efforts of the Government in economic recovery and development. The United Nations will continue to assist the Government by supporting improved access to basic social services, professional integration and job creation for young people, including through labour intensive work projects, cash-for-work programmes and access to independent and entrepreneurial employment, coupled with elements of professional training and access to microfinance.

E. Rebuilding national capacities and restoration of State authority

Security sector reform

47. Government interlocutors stressed that the reform of the security sector remains a critical priority, while recognizing that building independent, professional and impartial security institutions is a long-term process that requires national ownership. Notwithstanding the implementation of important steps towards the restructuring of the defence and security institutions, the national vision for the reform of the security sector is still being developed and the institutional structure to move the agenda forward has yet to take shape. Ideally, such a vision would result from a process of inclusive and consultative national dialogue and include, inter alia, the development of a legislative framework with the National Assembly playing an oversight role. In the meantime, the Government is taking a number of measures to address immediate challenges in the security sector, with United Nations support.

48. Government interlocutors indicated that President Ouattara intended to become more closely involved in security sector reform. The Government is also considering additional measures to enhance its coordination of national security matters and security sector reform. In the light of the need to restore confidence between the population and the armed forces, the Office of the Prime Minister is organizing meetings (assises nationales des armées) between the security and law enforcement institutions, local authorities and the population.

Armed forces

49. The Forces républicaines de Côte d'Ivoire, created in March 2011, has an estimated overall strength of some 40,000 elements, including 15,000 members of the gendarmerie. Efforts to address shortcomings notwithstanding, FRCI remains a

heterogeneous force facing considerable challenges with command and control, ill-discipline and cohesion. FRCI leadership stressed the importance of returning military personnel to barracks to enhance command and control of the troops. The leadership also emphasized the need for training and capacity development to bring the troops to the required level of quality and professionalism. Other priorities included the need for more effective control of the borders, establishing a maritime capacity and improving weapons and stockpile management, while United Nations assistance was requested in building new and rehabilitating existing barracks.

50. In addition, there are an estimated 40,000 personnel (although the numbers remain fluid), mostly recruited on an ad hoc basis during the crisis, who are associated with FRCI and placed nominally under FRCI leadership, although they are not considered regular members of the armed forces and are not paid salaries. The Government intends to assemble these personnel in 18 areas across the country, where they will undergo disarmament, identification procedures and selection. It is envisaged that 2,000 of them would be recruited to join FRCI; 15,000 would constitute a so-called reserve force to undertake development activities; and the remaining 23,000 would undergo disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. The Government has requested UNOCI support in building some of these assembly sites.

Police and gendarmerie

51. Police and gendarmerie personnel have redeployed in most parts of the country but their effectiveness is hampered by poor infrastructure and a lack of training and essential logistics, most importantly vehicles and communications equipment, particularly outside Abidjan, as well as the continued influence of former command structures in parts of the country. Therefore, in some instances, FRCI or associated armed elements continue to perform law enforcement responsibilities, and there continued to be incidents arising from mistrust between FRCI and the police and gendarmerie, although relations between the security agencies have improved.

52. As mentioned in the previous report (S/2011/807), a joint audit conducted by UNOCI and the Ivorian police, at the request of the Government, revealed important challenges that need to be addressed, including restructuring and professionalizing the national police and increasing its operational ability, which would require rehabilitating and re-equipping units vandalized during the crisis. Only around 30 per cent of police units and 20 per cent of gendarmerie units are appropriately equipped and have weapons. In addition, training remains an immediate priority as is reactivating the municipal police to enhance law and order at the local level.

Rule of law institutions

53. All 37 courts and 22 prisons have reopened since the end of the crisis, while work is under way to reopen the remaining 11 corrections facilities. However, shortcomings in the judicial system, including lack of resources, limited availability of legal aid programmes, slow and inefficient judicial proceedings, politicization of its personnel, inadequate case management systems and poor public perception and corruption, continue to hamper the effective maintenance of law and order and the administration of justice. National authorities have taken initiatives to address these issues with UNOCI support, including through the development of a national justice sector reform strategy. There are also initiatives under way to reform the corrections

system, although challenges remain in the management of corrections facilities and the lack of capacity to address shortcomings.

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

54. The Government acknowledged the importance of finding a solution for the untrained elements associated with FRCI during the crisis, including through disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and creating a reserve force. However, a comprehensive national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme is not yet in place to address other target groups, including militia, so-called dozos and foreign armed elements. Efforts are under way to develop this programme, which, as a first step, would require the establishment of a national body responsible for the planning, coordination and implementation of the programme. Interlocutors in Liberia also stressed the need for an effective disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme in Côte d'Ivoire in order to enhance stability in the border area. In Côte d'Ivoire, interlocutors identified the urgent need for the Government to establish clear eligibility criteria for those who would enter a national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, with a view to defining the size of the respective caseloads. The Government has announced an estimated caseload of some 60,000 who may benefit from such a programme, including 23,000 individuals associated with FRCI.

55. Once the Government decides on the reinsertion package to be offered to those who will disarm, UNOCI has the expertise and means to assist the Government with reinsertion. However, such assistance would be limited in time and scope. Coordinated, long-term and sustainable reintegration solutions for former combatants in Côte d'Ivoire are essential, but have yet to be identified. This is crucial, since some former combatants demobilized under previous programmes reportedly rearmed and joined the fighting in 2011, owing to a lack of sustainable reintegration. To avoid such a possible scenario in the future, the Government will need to develop a comprehensive and long-term reintegration programme, potentially on a subregional basis. The support of Côte d'Ivoire's bilateral and other partners will be important as the United Nations will not have the capacity or the funding to assist the Government in this important undertaking.

56. In the meantime, the Government has proceeded, with UNOCI support, with the ad hoc disarmament of 1,640 former combatants (mostly militia), collecting 1,035 weapons and 220,265 rounds of ammunition since April 2011.

Extension of State authority

57. Civil servants have resumed their duties across the country, but their effectiveness is hampered by damaged infrastructure and limited resources. Prefects have progressively restored their authority, including with regard to public order, although this varies depending on the capacity of the national security forces deployed in the respective areas. Prefects are chairing the local security committees tasked with ensuring and coordinating the provision of security at the local level. They comprise local FRCI and gendarmerie commanders, as well as other representatives of the local administration, including customs officials.

58. Some progress was made towards the reunification of the treasury. The fiscal administration began re-establishing its structures and services, and representatives of the public administration, in charge of controlling natural resources, are being

deployed across the country. Customs officials were deployed at different border crossing points along the borders with Burkina Faso, Mali and Guinea, although they lack capacity and sufficient deployment. In parallel, former Forces nouvelles elements allegedly continue to be involved in parallel networks, particularly in the north, including unofficial taxation and trade. The continued strengthening of the State at the local level was identified as crucial for the stabilization and consolidation of the country.

IV. Recommendations on possible adjustments in the strength and structure of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire

59. Further to the findings of the assessment mission, it is recommended that UNOCI should adjust its deployment and posture in order to be more effective and responsive to security developments, including by covering more remote areas and intensifying its engagement with local authorities and populations. This will require adjustments in the structure and strength of UNOCI military and police personnel (see annex I), as detailed below, in recognition of the progress made, while taking into account the challenges and risks that remain.

60. Stabilizing the security situation in a sustainable manner also requires continued support by UNOCI and the United Nations country team to the Ivorian authorities to strengthen the political process, rebuild national capacities, support the conduct of sensitive security-related processes, strengthen State authority, promote justice and reconciliation, provide basic services, promote and protect human rights, and address the root causes of the conflict, while supporting efforts with respect to humanitarian assistance and economic recovery. UNOCI is therefore reinforcing its field presence with a view to increasing its engagement at the local level.

Military component

61. The assessment mission specifically reviewed the need to retain the authorized troop level of UNOCI, which currently stands at 9,792 military personnel and includes the 2,400 additional troops authorized to reinforce UNOCI prior to and during the crisis. It was found that the crisis exacerbated existing problems and created new ones, which did not exist prior to the 2010 elections, as a result of the disintegration of the security apparatus during the crisis, the collapse of State authority, the creation of FRCI followed by ad hoc recruitment, the involvement of militias and foreign combatants in the crisis, the proliferation of weapons and the presence of key representatives of the former regime exiled in neighbouring countries. In addition, the French forces (Licorne forces) have further reduced their presence in Abidjan. It was therefore assessed that these challenges require maintaining the core strength of UNOCI, as well as retaining some of the additional capacities.

62. As the security situation in Abidjan has improved and the national security forces have an effective deployment in the city, fewer military patrols are required and some military tasks could be transferred to the national forces. It is therefore recommended to reduce the authorized military strength of UNOCI, in Abidjan, by the equivalent of one battalion. It is also recommended that UNOCI, in close

consultation with the Government, review the protection arrangements for Government members and key political stakeholders, as well as non-United Nations installations, with a view towards adjusting the resources required for that task.

63. In addition, it is recommended that the three armed helicopters currently deployed in UNMIL be transferred to UNOCI, in order to deter potential spoilers from any significant military action and to respond to localized threats to the population, especially in the border areas. It is also recommended that, although based in Côte d'Ivoire, the armed helicopters could be used in both Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, under a specific inter-mission cooperation arrangement.

Police

64. It is recommended that the authorized level of the formed police component of UNOCI should be maintained at 1,000 personnel, including the 100 personnel authorized as part of contingency planning prior to the 2010 elections, in the light of the challenges outlined above. In addition to the presence of formed police units in Abidjan, Bouaké, Daloa, Guiglo and Yamoussoukro, formed police units would be deployed to Boundiali, in the north, and Abengourou, in the east, to contribute to protecting civilians and supporting the Ivorian police and gendarmerie, including through joint patrols.

65. Furthermore, the 205 additional police advisers, authorized by the Security Council in its resolution 2000 (2011), would be accommodated through a reduction in the authorized military strength of UNOCI, which would lead to a total authorized strength of 555 individual police officers. These officers would assist in building the capacity of the Ivorian law enforcement agencies in such specialized areas as crowd control, community policing, judicial policing, communication, criminal investigation, sexual- and gender-based violence, organized crime and border management. They would also facilitate coordination between Ivorian and Liberian security services in the border area and support the reform of national security services and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes. At the same time, UNOCI police will continue its on-job training, collocation and mentoring programmes.

Enhancing border security

66. It is recommended that the United Nations, through all aspects of its presence in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, enhance its support for the stabilization of the border area, while the Ivorian and Liberian authorities build their capacities to control their borders and develop national and subregional strategies in coordination with national authorities, ECOWAS and the Mano River Union. UNOCI, UNMIL and the respective country teams should facilitate increased cooperation between the Ivorian and Liberian authorities and security forces at all levels, including through the establishment of coordination and liaison mechanisms.

67. Following the adoption of a plan by UNOCI and UNMIL during a meeting in Abidjan on 6 and 7 March, all components of UNOCI and UNMIL should further increase their cooperation and joint planning, including through formal and structured practices of information sharing, with a view to enabling a better understanding of regional dynamics, exchanging experiences and sharing of lessons learned. It is also recommended that the two missions increase joint border monitoring operations in coordination with the national security agencies and

conduct cross-border operations as required and authorized, which should include coordinated foot patrols along crossing points.

68. At the same time, the United Nations should enhance its efforts in support of the Ivorian and Liberian authorities in the sensitive border areas, in order to strengthen State authority based on a mapping of existing capacities; address immediate humanitarian needs; promote reconciliation and social cohesion at the local level; reduce the proliferation of weapons; and create the conditions conducive for the sustainable return of displaced populations. It may be useful in this regard for the United Nations presences in both countries to develop a shared strategic vision and plan for their respective engagement in the border areas over the short, medium and long term.

69. It is important that bilateral and other partners support the Ivorian and Liberian authorities, as well as the regional organizations, in the development of national and regional integrated border strategies and programmes within the framework of existing mechanisms of the Mano River Union and ECOWAS, with the support of the United Nations Office for West Africa, in accordance with Security Council resolution 2000 (2011).

V. Observations

70. I am encouraged by the steady progress and considerable achievements Côte d'Ivoire has made in returning to normalcy since the violent post-election crisis of 2011. I commend President Ouattara and his Government for their initiatives to further stabilize the situation, including by addressing immediate security challenges, advancing economic recovery, holding critical national elections and strengthening international and regional cooperation. These efforts demonstrate the Government's strong political will to progressively move the country forward and to put the crises of the past behind them. And these efforts have already yielded tangible results for the country and its people, particularly with respect to the security and economic situation in the country.

71. In spite of the progress made, the security situation is still fragile. The risks and threats Côte d'Ivoire continues to face are significant. The post-election crisis created significant new challenges, while the root causes and potential triggers of instability remain unaddressed. I am particularly concerned about a number of risk factors that are a threat to the safety and security of people in Côte d'Ivoire, and which also carry the risk of destabilizing the country, most importantly, the state of the national security agencies, the unresolved issues related to security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and the circulation of weapons. The intent of persons affiliated to the former regime in neighbouring countries could also pose a potential risk. In addition, emerging threats to stability in West Africa could affect Côte d'Ivoire, while the border area between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia is particularly vulnerable. The peace has been hard won and is still fragile in both countries.

72. I would encourage the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia to work closely with UNOCI, UNMIL and the United Nations country teams to enhance the stabilization of the border areas, while developing national and regional strategies. Support by bilateral and other partners to develop the capacity of the Ivorian and Liberian national security agencies with respect to effective border management will

be essential. However, the issue is much broader, and addressing cross-border threats will require a firm engagement from the subregion. The development of a strategy by ECOWAS to address the threats of cross-border movements of armed elements and weapons, as well as illicit trafficking and organized crime, therefore remains an important priority. I would reiterate that the United Nations presences in West Africa, and that of the United Nations Office for West Africa specifically, stand ready to actively support such initiatives by ECOWAS and by the Mano River Union. I further welcome the appointment of President Ouattara as Chair of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS, and call upon him to use this important opportunity to address pressing security challenges that threaten peace and security in West Africa.

73. Security incidents and human rights violations committed across the country are of serious concern. The initial efforts by the Government to curb ill-discipline within the armed forces are important and exemplify the urgent need for serious efforts to reform the security sector, which is vital to sustainable peace and stability. There is an equally pressing need to find a durable solution for former combatants, especially those who will not be absorbed in the security agencies. There is a real risk, based upon lessons learned from the recent crisis, that in the absence of such solutions for those elements, they could become a threat to human rights and stability in Côte d'Ivoire and the subregion, as they are more likely to pick up arms again, should the opportunity arise. I therefore urge the Government to work closely with UNOCI and other international partners to develop a comprehensive, long-term national plan for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, taking into account the subregional dimension. I also urge the Government and international and regional partners to support the Government in finding solutions to ensure sustainable reintegration, as well as early recovery and job creation.

74. I commend the successful conduct of the long-awaited legislative elections, which are particularly important for more representative governance, and will enable efforts aimed at consolidating peace and democracy as well as sowing the seeds for long-term development. All Ivorians have a role to play in moving towards sustainable peace, stability and prosperity in Côte d'Ivoire, whether from within institutions, as political stakeholders or members of civil society. The Government represents the interests of all Ivorians and it is therefore essential that it continues to reach out to the opposition through serious dialogue. I also urge political leaders to engage in dialogue in the interest of all Ivorians seeking peace and a better future.

75. I would also recall that it is the responsibility of the Government to protect freedom of assembly and freedom of expression, which are fundamental democratic rights. But, it is equally the responsibility of all Ivorians to refrain from inflammatory statements, actions and violence. Continuing to challenge the legitimacy of democratically elected officials only increases tensions, contributes to debilitating mistrust and encourages violence. I therefore call upon political leaders to engage constructively in the political life of the country in order to realize a better future. The good offices role of my Special Representative remains critical in this regard to facilitate enhanced political dialogue between all political stakeholders and to ensure a more vibrant and diverse political landscape that will contribute to the return of normalcy in all aspects.

76. Although significant, the establishment of the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission is only a first step on the long road to achieving

meaningful reconciliation. Progress is slow and there is a need for reconciliation at all levels, with the aim of addressing the root causes of the crises and promoting social cohesion, which is indispensable for lasting stability in Côte d'Ivoire. I therefore encourage the Government and all partners to continue supporting the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission to ensure its effective functioning in line with international standards. At the same time, I encourage the Government to continue to promote reconciliation and dispute resolution mechanisms as part of the political process and an important factor for good governance, while building on reconciliation mechanisms at the local level. The United Nations will continue to support these efforts.

77. Reconciliation must go hand in hand with justice, and ensuring accountability for violations of human rights and international humanitarian law is critical. I therefore urge the Government to ensure that investigations are independent and impartial, and to ensure individuals are brought to justice, irrespective of their political affiliation.

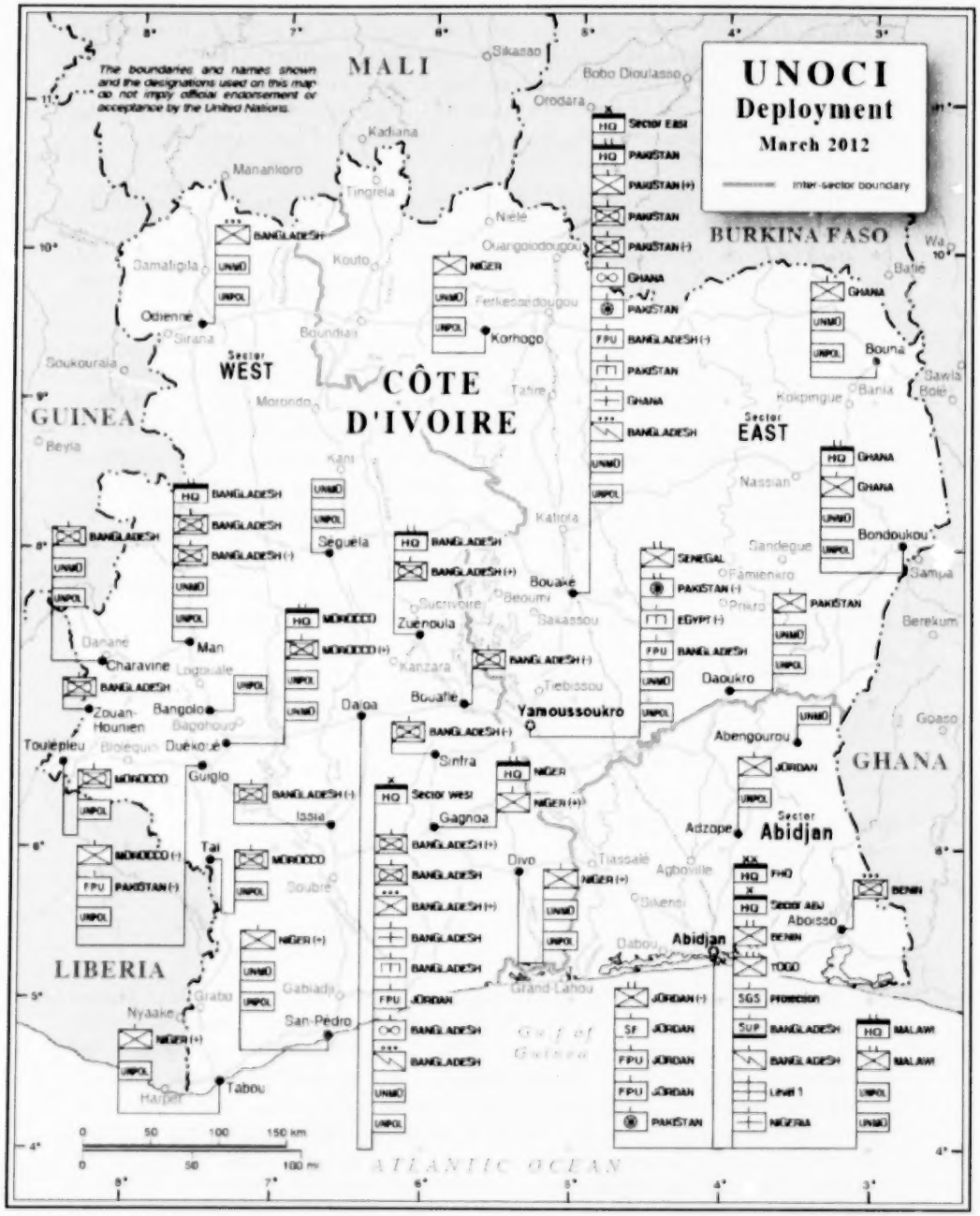
78. In the light of these significant challenges, UNOCI peacekeepers will continue to play an important role in supporting Government efforts to further stabilize the security situation and protect civilians across the country. I therefore recommend that the current military strength of UNOCI (see annex II) be maintained during the current mandate period, ending on 31 July 2012. However, progress registered on the ground should be reflected for any future extension of mandate, and the implementation of a reduced authorized strength of 8,837, comprising 8,645 troops and staff officers and 192 military observers, should start after the renewal of the mandate of UNOCI, should the Security Council so decide. Given the need to enhance public order, I further recommend that the current strength of UNOCI formed police units remain at 1,000 personnel, while the authorized strength of its individual police officers reflect the additional 205 police advisers, for a total of 555 individual police officers, as authorized by the Security Council in its resolution 2000 (2011). In addition, UNOCI and the United Nations country team will enhance the presence of civilian personnel at the local level in order to improve the effective delivery of mandated activities and programmes.

79. Looking ahead, I am confident that Côte d'Ivoire will continue on a steady path to recovery and I recommend that the situation be reviewed by 31 March 2013, at which time I will present my recommendations on the conditions that should be in place for future adjustments in the structure and strength of UNOCI. It will continue to be important that any such adjustments be made on the basis of the prevailing situation on the ground and threats to Côte d'Ivoire's sustainable peace and stability, and the capacity of Ivorian institutions to effectively meet such challenges.

80. In conclusion, I wish to thank my Special Representative, Albert Gerard Koenders, for his leadership, and all the personnel of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire and the United Nations country team for their determination and dedication in support of the Ivorian people. Their service, often under difficult conditions, has been instrumental in stabilizing the situation in Côte d'Ivoire. My appreciation also goes to the key partners, including countries contributing troops and police to UNOCI, regional organizations, donor countries and the multilateral and non-governmental organizations that continue to provide invaluable support to Côte d'Ivoire.

Annex I

Map of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire deployment



Annex II

United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire: military and police strength as at 18 March 2012

	Military component				*Police component*	
Country	*Military observers*	*Staff officers*	*Troops*	*Total*	*Formed police units*	*Police*
Argentina	—	—	—	—	—	3
Bangladesh	12	9	2 161	2 182	360	1
Benin	8	7	420	435	—	49
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	3	—	—	3	—	—
Brazil	4	3	—	7	—	—
Burundi	—	—	—	—	—	38
Cameroon	—	—	—	—	—	6
Canada	—	—	—	—	—	9
Central African Republic	—	—	—	—	—	15
Chad	5	1	—	6	—	23
China	5	—	—	5	—	—
Djibouti	—	—	—	—	—	36
Democratic Republic of the Congo	—	—	—	—	—	27
Ecuador	2	—	—	2	—	—
Egypt	—	1	175	176	—	—
El Salvador	3	—	—	3	—	—
Ethiopia	2	—	—	2	—	—
France	—	6	—	6	—	22
Gambia	2	—	—	2	—	—
Ghana	5	7	515	527	—	6
Guatemala	5	—	—	5	—	—
Guinea	3	—	—	3	—	—
India	7	—	—	7	—	—
Ireland	2	—	—	2	—	—
Jordan	7	13	1 058	1 078	486	14
Madagascar	—	—	—	—	—	14
Malawi	3	2	857	862	—	—
Morocco	—	3	721	724	—	—
Namibia	2	—	—	2	—	—
Nepal	3	1	—	4	—	—
Niger	6	4	930	940	—	43
Nigeria	6	1	63	70	—	10
Pakistan	8	11	1 378	1 397	149	—
Paraguay	6	2	—	8	—	—
Peru	3	—	—	3	—	—

	Military component				*Police component*	
Country	*Military observers*	*Staff officers*	*Troops*	*Total*	*Formed police units*	*Police*
Philippines	3	3	—	6	—	—
Poland	4	—	—	4	—	—
Republic of Korea	2	—	—	2	—	—
Republic of Moldova	4	—	—	4	—	—
Romania	6	—	—	6	—	—
Russian Federation	10	—	—	10	—	—
Rwanda	—	—	—	—	—	8
Senegal	13	7	517	537	—	3
Serbia	3	—	—	3	—	—
Togo	7	8	517	532	—	3
Tunisia	7	3	—	10	—	—
Turkey	—	—	—	—	—	13
Uganda	5	2	—	7	—	—
Ukraine	—	—	—	—	—	4
United Republic of Tanzania	1	2	—	3	—	—
Uruguay	2	—	—	2	—	1
Yemen	8	—	—	8	—	19
Zambia	2	—	—	2	—	—
Zimbabwe	3	—	—	3	—	—
Total	**192**	**96**	**9 312**	**9 600**	**995**	**367**

United Nations S/2012/187

Security Council

Distr.: General
30 March 2012

Original: English

Identical letters dated 30 March 2012 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a detailed table on the losses incurred in the Syrian Arab Republic due to the acts committed by armed terrorist groups (see annex). The table covers the period from the beginning of the events in Syria until 15 March 2012, and it contains the following information:

- Death toll of civilians: 3,212 people
- Death toll of police: 478 people
- Death toll of Army and Security Forces: 2,088 people (as at 21 March 2012)
- Death toll of women: 204 people
- Death toll of children: 56 people
- Death toll of directly assassinated people: 106 people

Total: 6,144 deaths in the Syrian Arab Republic

- Kidnapped civilians, army personnel and police officers: 1,570 people, including 941 missing people
- Stolen government vehicles: 2,286 vehicles

It would be highly appreciated if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

12-28131 (E) 020412 020412

Please recycle

Annex to the identical letters dated 30 March 2012 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

[Original: Arabic]

Human and material losses in the country's various governorates caused by the actions of armed terrorist groups since the events began up to 15 March 2012

Governorate	*Civilians killed*	*Incidents of looting*	*Destruction of private and public property*	*Theft of vehicles*	*Civilians abducted*		*Military personnel abducted*		*Police personnel abducted*	
					Total	*Fate unknown or killed*	*Total*	*Fate unknown or killed*	*Total*	*Fate unknown or killed*
Homs	1 103	368	865	177	494	297	33	31	58	51
Idlib	406	210	478	865	118	39	41	36	77	51
Hama	487	132	232	619	196	98	63	59	175	121
Dar'a	451	39	195	91	25	17	6	4	13	5
Rif Dimashq	390	212	218	270	81	32	—	—	16	16
Damascus	124	16	131	48	15	4	—	—	8	5
Ladhiqiyah	102	12	155	1	7	—	—	—	5	—
Hasakah	4	21	47	4	5	1	—	—	—	—
Raqqah	2	11	45	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Suwayda'	—	30	3	2	—	—	1	1	—	—
Qunaytirah	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Aleppo	48	195	146	193	42	42	3	1	76	25
Dayr al-Zawr	72	43	93	10	4	1	4	4	4	—
Tartus	22	2	10	5	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	**3 212**	**1 291**	**2 618**	**2 286**	**987**	**531**	**151**	**136**	**432**	**274**

United Nations A/ES-10/550–S/2012/188

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
18 April 2012

Original: English

General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-seventh year

Identical letters dated 30 March 2012 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I regret to inform you of the scores of Palestinian civilian casualties caused by the deliberate and excessive force used by Israel, the occupying Power, against protesters today in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. At least one young Palestinian man has been killed and more than 300 Palestinians have been wounded, some of them critically injured, by the Israeli occupying forces, which fired tear gas canisters, stun grenades and live ammunition at civilians who were taking part in demonstrations in commemoration of the thirty-sixth anniversary of Land Day.

In the Gaza Strip, the occupying forces killed Mahmoud Zaqout, age 19, near the Erez crossing point, in addition to injuring more than 30 other Palestinians at the area of Erez as well as in Khan Younis. In the West Bank, protesters in the Ramallah, Bethlehem and Al-Khalil areas suffered injuries, with the majority injured near the Qalandiya checkpoint between Ramallah and Occupied East Jerusalem. Israel's repression of the Palestinian civilian population on this day also included a complete closure of the West Bank and even more severe restrictions on freedom of movement and particularly access to Occupied East Jerusalem by Palestinians, including access to worship at Al-Haram Al-Sharif (the Noble Sanctuary) for Friday prayers.

Significantly, despite the restrictive and repressive measures imposed by the occupying Power, major demonstrations to commemorate Land Day were held throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in the cities of East Jerusalem, Ramallah, Bethlehem, Al-Khalil, and Nablus as well as in the Gaza Strip. Moreover, it is important to note that thousands of people also participated in demonstrations in Lebanon and Jordan and in solidarity demonstrations held in many other countries around the world to protest against Israel's confiscation of Palestinian land and other illegal and oppressive practices against the Palestinian people and to call for respect for their inalienable rights, including their right to freedom and self-determination in the homeland.

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In this regard, I wish to draw your attention to the communiqué issued today by the Palestine Liberation Organization Executive Committee in commemoration of Land Day. The communiqué, inter alia, stressed that the land was and still is the essence of this ongoing conflict and affirmed the right of the Palestinian people in their homeland, regardless of the attempts by the occupation to distort or marginalize this conflict and deny the rights of the Palestinian people, who continue to strive to achieve justice, freedom and independence in their State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, on the basis of the pre-1967 borders. The centrality of Jerusalem for the achievement of a peaceful and just settlement of this conflict was stressed, with a call to protect the City as a symbol of religious and human tolerance, to affirm its Palestinian and Arab identity, and to reject the occupying Power's unlawful and provocative policies of settlement colonization and annexation, displacement, Judaization and racism in the City. The communiqué also emphasized that the occupying Power's continued denial of Palestinian rights and policy of destruction of the two-State solution through its insidious settlement campaign in the Palestinian Territory will lead to disastrous consequences affecting not just Palestine and Israel but the region and the global community as well. In this regard, the centrality of resolving the question of Palestine, the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict, for achieving peace, stability and security in the region was underscored.

Regrettably, Israel, the occupying Power, continues to ignore the international community, to flout the long-standing parameters of the two-decades-old Middle East peace process — founded upon relevant Security Council resolutions, the land-for-peace principle and the two-State solution based on the pre-1967 borders, which forms the core of the Arab Peace Initiative — and to grossly violate international law, including perpetration of grave breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention. This includes Israel's ongoing illegal settlement campaign throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in and around East Jerusalem, by which the occupying Power is confiscating and colonizing more and more Palestinian land, with the clear and deliberate intention to illegally annex those lands, further destroying the contiguity and integrity of the Palestinian Territory and destroying the prospects for realizing, and the viability of, the two-State solution.

Such illegal schemes are borne out by the daily illegal and provocative actions undertaken by the Government of Israel as well as its extremist settlers rampaging throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and further borne out by the recent revelation of plans by the Ministry of Defense of Israel for the confiscation of hundreds of thousands more dunums of Palestinian land for the expansion of its vast illegal network of settlements. In this regard, it has been revealed that Israel has already marked 569 parcels of Palestinian land, totalling at least 620,000 dunums (approximately 155,000 acres), which constitute another 10 per cent of the West Bank, for the illegal construction and expansion of hundreds of illegal Israeli settlements and so-called outposts.

We thus call urgently on the international community, including the Security Council, to give due attention to all of these illegal Israeli actions, measures and schemes in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to act collectively to demand an immediate end to them, and to demand that Israel, the occupying Power, respect its legal obligations and cease its flagrant defiance of international law and the global demands for respect. The international community must uphold its responsibilities in this regard. The failure to hold Israel accountable

for its crimes and human rights violations against the Palestinian people and its constant and reckless provocation and incitement will only allow for the further destabilization of the critical situation on the ground, leading us further away from realizing the peace and stability we have for so long been seeking, with far-reaching negative consequences.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 421 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 13 March 2012 (A/ES-10/549-S/2012/154) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations

United Nations A/66/758–S/2012/189

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
2 April 2012

Original: English

General Assembly
Sixty-sixth session
Agenda item 35
Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

Security Council
Sixty-seventh year

Identical letters dated 30 March 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, dated 30 March 2012, on the nineteenth round of the Geneva international discussions (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex issued as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 35, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Alexander **Lomaia**
Permanent Representative

12-28180 (E) 040412

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Annex to the identical letters dated 30 March 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia on the nineteenth round of the Geneva international discussions

The nineteenth round of the Geneva international discussions was held on 29 March 2012. The participants in the Geneva discussions took part in an individual capacity in the two working groups, one focusing on security and stability in Georgia's occupied regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali/South Ossetia and the other on the safe and dignified return of internally displaced persons and refugees to the places of their original residence. The discussions are co-moderated by representatives of the United Nations, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and attended by participants from Georgia, the Russian Federation and the United States of America. The Head of the Provisional Administration of the former South Ossetian Autonomous District and the Chair of the Government of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia, as well as representatives of the proxy regimes from Tskhinvali and Sokhumi, took part in the nineteenth round of the Geneva discussions.

The principal goal of the first working group of the Geneva discussions remains to reach agreement on the non-use of force and the international security arrangements. The necessity of undertaking the commitment not to use force against Georgia and the full implementation of all provisions of the 12 August 2008 ceasefire agreement from the Russian side is especially important in the context of Russia's plan to hold a large-scale military exercise "Caucasus 2012" in September and the rising aggressive rhetoric from Russian officials. Such commitment from the Russian side, reciprocating the unilateral pledge made by Tbilisi in November 2010, would alleviate the existing security concerns and constitute a significant step towards stability on the ground. The discussions held during the nineteenth round demonstrated that this process has a potential of moving in the right direction and the pledge on the non-use of force from Moscow could materialize in the foreseeable future.

It is noteworthy that the Russian side responded to the concerns raised by the Georgian participants on the military drill "Caucasus 2012" with the assurance that the training would be command-and-staff drill and would not include Russian troops deployed outside of the territory of Russia. The Georgian side will wait for this statement to be officially confirmed by the relevant authorities of the Russian Federation and be substantiated by the actual facts on the ground before making further official assessments.

It remains the declared goal of the Georgian side to ensure that the Russian Federation fully implements the 12 August ceasefire agreement and withdraws its troops to the places held before the outbreak of the hostilities. The Georgian side once again offered a number of interim measures before the full implementation of the ceasefire agreement takes place and the full-fledged international security regime, consisting, inter alia, of the international peacekeeping/police missions, is established in the occupied regions. The Co-Chairs of the Geneva discussions, as

well as the representatives of the United States, also share the position that the best guarantee of the non-resumption of hostilities and security and stability on the ground is the establishment of solid international security arrangements.

Participants also discussed the issues pertaining to the work of the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanisms, which are dealing with the whole spectrum of issues related to the security environment on the ground. However, full utilization of the potential of the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanisms and the instruments available to the Mechanisms still remains to be achieved.

During the nineteenth round of the Geneva discussions, as in previous rounds, no progress was registered on the fundamental questions issues within the second working group, which deals with the return of the internally displaced persons and refugees and humanitarian issues. Moscow and its proxy regimes still refuse to discuss the safe, dignified and voluntary return of the internally displaced persons and refugees to the places of their original residence and fail to recognize the fundamental rights of internally displaced persons and refugees.

Within the second working group, the Georgian side raised the issue of protection of cultural heritage within the occupied regions of Georgia. During the information session, held on 28 March, the legal tools for the protection of cultural heritage were presented to the participants of the Geneva discussions, leading to an interesting exchange of views on the subject. The Georgian side maintains that the best way to ensure the protection of the sites of cultural heritage is to proceed in a non-politicized humanitarian way, with the involvement of neutral international organizations in the oversight of these important monuments of historical importance.

The twentieth round of the Geneva international discussions will take place on 8 June 2012.

Tbilisi, 30 March 2012